MGT rebrands to *Voices of the Marianas* under new foundation. PAGE 2
CHCC-CGC launches Pediatric Mental Healthcare Access Program. PAGE 4

Hafa Adai!

$1

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXXIV, Issue No. 153

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IN RESPONSE TO DISPUTE OVER MAÑAGAHA USE

'There is room for compromise'

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

"There is absolutely room for compromise."

This was Gov. Arnold I. Palacios' statement after meeting with a group of marine operators concerned about the Department of Public Land's proposed amendments to the rules and regulations governing the use of Mañagaha Island.

The group appeared before Palacios and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang yesterday to voice their concerns to which Palacios agreed to serve as a me-

See ROOM on Page 4

KIMBERLY B. ESMORES

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, left, and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang speak to the media following a meeting with local marine operators concerned about the Department of Public Land's proposed amendments to the rules and regulations on the use of Mañagaha island.

214% increase in homebound *man'amko* congregants on Saipan

RACQUEL FLOYD

The Office on Aging building in China Town. The office has seen its congregants increase from 310 in 2020 to 716 today.

By RACQUEL H. FLOYD
raxfloyd@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

The number of Office on Aging homebound congregants on Saipan has significantly rose from 140 in 2020 to the current 440—a 214% increase, according to Office on Aging director Walter Manglona.

See 214% on Page 4

Sen. Manglona files petition for re-election

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

One of Rota's most vocal champions, Sen. Paul Manglona (Ind-Rota), has officially filed his petition for re-election and is seeking Rota's support this coming general elections.

Yesterday, Manglona, joined by his friends, family, and CNMI leaders Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang and former

See PETITION on Page 4

KIMBERLY B. ESMORES

Yesterday, Sen. Paul Manglona (Ind-Rota), joined by his friends, family, and CNMI leaders Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang and former governor Juan Nekai Babauta, officially filed his petition for re-election at the Commonwealth Election Commission formalizing his run for another term in the Senate.

Senate panel deliberates Mafnas' nomination

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Remedios Mafnas, who was nominated by Gov. Arnold I. Palacios to serve as acting Department of Commerce secretary last May 10, appeared before the Senate Standing Committee on Executive Appointments and Government Investigations' public hearing yesterday.

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Senate Standing Committee on Executive Appointments and Government Investigations held a public hearing yesterday on the nomination of acting

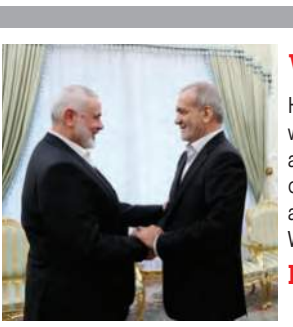
See SENATE on Page 4

INSIDE

BUSINESS

The Small Business Development Center of the CNMI announces the successful completion of a tri-island training series on the USDA Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer Programs.

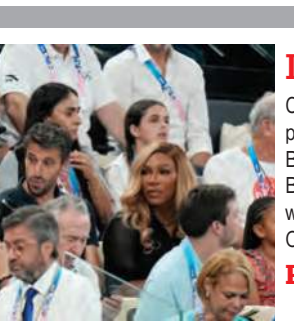
PAGE 10



WORLD

Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh was assassinated in Iran after attending the inauguration of the country's new president, Iran and the militant group said early Wednesday.

PAGE 14



LIFE & STYLE

Celebrity spotting was again part of the event at a raucous Bercy Arena when Simone Biles powered a dominant U.S. women's gymnastics team to the Olympic title on Tuesday night.

PAGE 15

SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

GOT A NEWS TIP? TEL: 235-6397 / 235-2440 FAX: 235-3740 EMAIL: editor@saipantribune.com

Job Vacancy Announcement

ANAKS GENERAL MANAGER

MINIMUM QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Bachelor's degree from a U.S.- accredited institution, or equivalent
2. Four or more years' experience in a management position
3. Computer literate, proficient in Microsoft Office applications (Word, Excel, PowerPoint), email, Internet searches. Knowledge of accounting software, Quicken, a plus.
4. Strong organizational, supervisory, problem-solving and communication skills
5. U.S. citizen/Permanent resident
6. Multilingual a plus (Japanese, Korean, Mandarin Chinese)

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Maintain accurate, up-to-date financial records according to generally accepted accounting principles.
2. Provide financial statements to the Board of Directors as requested.
3. Ensure compliance with all federal and local laws, tax requirements, annual corporate reports, and other reporting requirements.
4. Responsible for determining staffing requirements, hiring, training, supervising, and evaluating all ANAKS employees, including establishing working hours, ensuring the payment of wages and deduction of employment taxes, obtaining Workers Compensation insurance, preparing an annual personnel budget, and managing all other aspects of ANAKS staffing.
5. Prepare and distribute monthly billing statements to all homeowners and/or tenants, as applicable.
6. Establish an effective and timely system for collecting owners'/tenants' monthly management fees and other receivables due.
7. Monitor water and electricity usage for all units and prepare billings accordingly.
8. Ensure efficient, prompt payment to all vendors, suppliers, contractors, etc.
9. Establish and implement maintenance schedules for reverse osmosis water system, generators, pumps, sewer system, swimming pool, tennis court, and other ANAKS equipment and infrastructure.
10. Maintain an inventory of necessary spare replacement parts to ensure smooth operation of water system, generators, swimming pool, and other equipment as needed.
11. Ensure that all common areas including the swimming pool area, garbage houses, roadways, tennis court, walkways, etc. are clean, well-maintained and in good condition, and grounds and landscaping are attractive and regularly maintained.
12. Keep the Board informed of major preventive maintenance costs, emergencies, repairs, and replacements per the Board's Expenditure Policy.
13. Conduct routine inspections of the exterior of all units and make recommendations for repairs and improvements.
14. Work closely with, and provide administrative support to the Board of Directors (attend board and committee meetings, draft meeting minutes, enforce policies/bylaws/regulations, budgeting) to continuously improve and beautify the complex.
15. Develop standard operating procedures (SOPs) for day-to-day operations, maintenance, procurement of products and services, financial management, etc.; and human resources tasks such as staff performance evaluations, employee development/training, employee recognition, disciplinary and grievance procedures, etc.
16. Other duties as assigned by the President or Board of Directors.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Interested candidates should submit their resume, cover letter, recent police clearance, and professional references via email to: office1@anaks.net by August 7, 2024. Please include "General Manager Application" in the subject line.

World
Breastfeeding Week
BREASTFEEDING CHAMPIONS
What made you choose to breastfeed?
"The encouragement from my sister Ann Marie, WIC program personnel, and all the doctors that I saw throughout my appointments on my 1st pregnancy. Each one of them had emphasized the importance of breastfeeding and the benefits my newborn will gain."
What support did you have or wish you had to help with your breastfeeding journey?
Jane Castro,
Tinian, CNMI
Mom of 3
"The WIC program was my biggest support through all 3 pregnancies. I am forever grateful for the opportunity to participate in this program. Despite being a mother of 3, I encountered the most difficult breastfeeding challenges in 2023. Ms. Patricia (WIC Breastfeeding Peer Support Counselor), along with Ms. Arley Long, were my primary sources of support during this time."
What is your favorite part about breastfeeding?
"The bond we form once she started nursing is priceless and the thought of our bond growing even stronger. Those soft and warm little caresses from those tiny hands just fills my heart. It also allows me to escape from reality and to just simply enjoy and cherish the moments of being a mother and being thankful for the blessings of having another child."
Join us celebrate
World Breastfeeding Week!
Minachom Atdao
Aug. 2, 2024 | 10:00AM - 2:00PM
WIC CNMI
Learn more about WIC Breastfeeding Support Services at (670) 664-4084 or (670) 236-8741 !
www.chcc.health
This AD is funded by USDA 202424W100347
This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Local

MGT rebrands to *Voices of the Marianas* under new foundation

CHRYSTAL MARINO

From left, Save the Music Foundation and *Marianas Got Talent* executive director Donovan Castro, chair Arlene Reyes, and sergeant-at-arms Dwayne Castro smile after an interview with *Saipan Tribune* at the Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan in Garapan.

By CHRYSTAL MARINO
chrystal_marino@saipantribune.com
CORRESPONDENT

With registration currently underway for Season 2 of *Marianas Got Talent*, the group wants to share with the community that they will be going forward with the show without former counterpart Marianas Performing Arts Competition Corp. and will even be rebranding the show.

Taking on a larger vision, *Marianas Got Talent* will be rebranded to *Voices of the Marianas* under new nonprofit Save the Music Foundation. In a sit-down conversation with *Saipan Tribune*, Save the Music Foundation chair Arlene Reyes, executive director Donovan Castro, and sergeant-at-arms Dwayne Castro shared the reason behind the name change and the mission behind their new organization.

Reyes, former treasurer of MPACC, said that she really doesn't want to be negative toward *MGT*'s former partner MPACC or its founder Daniel Quitugua, but sees now that they had different methods and priorities which resulted in things not working out between them. She shared that several issues surfaced that caused unhealthy tensions within the group, and shortly after former MPACC vice president Gus Litulumar resigned this past March after their fundraiser gala, she followed suit.

After that, a majority of Season 1 finalists also pulled out of MPACC. Reyes shared that even with all the setbacks, the dream was still there to represent and make known the voices and talents of the NMI.

"We're normal. We're humans. And sometimes when we go through challenges, it's going to get you behind...it's a setback for a great comeback."

She shared that she, along with Litulumar, and the contestants banded together to make the dream happen, thus beginning the Save the Music Foundation.

"We are a non-profit giving back to the community. We are not hoping to try to enrich

See MGT on Page 3

NMPASI
NORTHERN MARIANAS PROTECTION & ADVOCACY SYSTEMS, INC.
PO Box 503529, Saipan, MP 96950 Tel. Nos.: (670) 235-7273/4 - Fax: (670) 235-7275

REQUEST FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS

NMPASI hereby seeks comments and/or suggestions from the community on how to improve upon its proposed Statement of Goals & Priorities/Statement of Priorities and Objectives for fiscal year 2025 as follows:

Northern Marianas Protection & Advocacy Systems, Inc. (NMPASI)
STATEMENT OF GOALS AND PRIORITIES/STATEMENT OF PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES
(FY 2025)

GOAL 1: In fiscal year 2025, NMPASI will provide legally-based advocacy services on behalf of individuals with disabilities and their families in the CNMI.

Priority 1.1: In fiscal year 2025, NMPASI will facilitate appropriate advocacy and provide direct representation for no less than #### (at least one more than FY 2024) eligible individuals with disabilities in the community.

Priority 1.2: In fiscal year 2025, NMPASI personnel will facilitate sufficient technical assistance to individuals with disabilities, family members of individuals with disabilities and other members of the general community at large.

Priority 1.3: In fiscal year 2025, NMPASI personnel will facilitate appropriate representation for un/underserved individuals with disabilities (including but not limited to those living in institutions or other housing facilities).

GOAL 2: In fiscal year 2025, NMPASI personnel will advance the understanding of and appreciation for protection & advocacy services and other disability-related issues in the CNMI.

Priority 2.1: In fiscal year 2025, NMPASI personnel will facilitate opportunities for the community to engage in learning about disability-related issues.

Priority 2.2: In fiscal year 2025, NMPASI personnel will promote the understanding of local and federal disability laws

Priority 2.3: In fiscal year 2025, NMPASI personnel will foster local capacity in self-advocacy for individuals with disabilities.

GOAL 3: To enhance the quality of protection & advocacy services and the efficiency of the organization's operations.

Priority 3.1: Maintain an efficient, effective, and legally-compliant administrative operation.

Priority 3.2: Maintain an effective, diverse and knowledgeable staff and board of directors.

Priority 3.3: Ensure sufficient and sustainable funding in support of organization's mission.

For any request for the following notice to be in alternative format or language, please contact NMPASI at (670) 235-7273/74. Please submit public comments either digitally, in-person or via Telephone by August 01, 2024 and before September 30, 2024, by using the following communication platforms.
Email: gborja@nmpasi.org or cnening@nmpasi.org
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 503529 Saipan MP, 96950 | Tel: (670) 235-7273

*NMPASI, a local non-profit organization, administers grant funds from the **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)**/Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)/Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS), the Administration for Community Living (ACL), and the Human Resources Services Administration (HRSA), the **U.S. Department of Education (DOE)**/Rehabilitation **Services Administration (RSA), and the Social Security Administration (SSA).**

MGT

From page 2

ourselves, actually, it's a big sacrifice for each of us leading this to manage and hold all of these busking events, meetings, and holding all of these other fundraisers. We worked so hard to get to where we need to be, and if there's a lack of transparency, if there's a lack of honesty, we're not going to get to our goal, which is far greater than the power of having a certain position. With us, we consider each other equal, regardless of what the title is."

Reyes shared that in order to maintain transparency, the organization has a large group of members in leadership, several of whom were former contestants from Season 1.

"We trust each other. That's the most important thing in any non-profit or for-profit. Trust is very important. Transparency and honesty are very important. I myself as a person, and my team cannot proceed without being transparent. Honesty is the best key to success in anything you do. Teamwork. Respect. Honesty. Transparency. That's very, very important. This is a team effort. This is a community effort. We want to give back to the community. We didn't create this non-profit to try to gain proceeds for ourselves, to enrich us. That's not what we believe in." She highlighted that they have learned a lot from past experiences and in their new organization they strive for transparency, and to create a non-toxic, and unified environment for their team and future participants.

Reyes noted that she believes the community needs to know the change and rebrand especially with several cases of misinformation going around. She shared that one person had gone to their now executive director Donovan Castro with a wrong perception of *MGT* due to misinformation

"Somebody told him, we're so proud that you're using the BOOST money for *MGT*."

Castro and Reyes shared that they were both surprised. "We never got 'BOOSTed,'" said Reyes. "Because MGT was not established yet, we didn't get the license for MPACC until May 2024." She shared that there were publicly accessible files listing who in MPACC had been "BOOSTed" but it was not *MGT* itself.

Castro added, "I was confronted by several people saying this. I said no, I didn't know anything about getting 'BOOSTed.' I know for a fact that, at least with *MGT*, we're a clean slate," he said. "You know, there's a lot of other news networks outside of, you know, the main platforms on island. And it's just crazy how, like, it created this narrative."

"But moving forward, we have a different name," Reyes said. "We have a different new foundation. And our foundation serves a bigger purpose for the entire CNMI. And it's not just a competition. It really isn't."

She shared the overall goal of the Save the Music Foundation is to enhance the music educational experience for the younger generation. She shared that they are hoping to extend their services to the Public School System to create a type of after-school program centered around music.

She said that together with *Voices of the Marianas* and their community partners, Save the Music Foundation seeks to promote and provide music education in order to protect the CNMI's musical heritage.

Reyes said that along with providing voice lessons and teaching kids how to play a certain instrument, they hope

See MGT on Page 4

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp Website: http://www.cnmi-cdbgdr.com

INVITATION FOR BID (IFB) NMHC IFB 2024-008

(This ad is paid by NMHC by HUD funds)

BID SUBMISSION DATE: August 08, 2024, 2:00 p.m.

MARIANAS HIGH SCHOOL GYM HVAC PROJECT

Project Package will be available on June 24, 2024, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, during regular working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday thru Friday except CNMI holidays. A non-refundable payment of One-Hundred Dollars ($100.00) is required for each set of the project package. Payment must be made payable to NMHC and receipt of payment must be presented when obtaining the project package at the reception counter.

Brief description of the project package is available on the NMHC CDBG-DR Website at https://www.cnmi-cdbgdr.com/ "Procurement Tab".

The provisions on the NMHC Procurement regulations, NMIAC 100-60-725 AND 100-60-730 Prohibiting Gratuities, Kickbacks and Contingent Fees shall apply.

A Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference will be held at the NMHC Central Office Conference located in Garapan, Saipan on **July 09, 2024, 10:00 a.m.** In addition, a Mandatory site Visit/Inspection of the project site will be conducted immediately after the Pre-Bid Conference. Failure to attend both the Mandatory Pre-bid conference and the Mandatory site Visit/Inspection will be considered a non-responsive bidder.

For more information, contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager, at (670) 234-9447 or via email at officemanager@nmhcgov.net during business hours, 7:30am – 4:30pm Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

/s/ JESSE S. PALACIOS
Corporate Director

/s/ MERCED "MARCIE" M. TOMOKANE
Chairwoman
NMHC Board of Directors

BankPacific
Where others put branches, we place roots

NOTICE OF INACTIVE DEPOSIT ACCOUNTS

The following Checking Accounts have been inactive with BankPacific for at least six months. The account owner should immediately contact the BankPacific Saipan Branch, Garapan at (670) 233-4752. The funds of each inactive account will be transferred to the Commonwealth Treasurer during the month of October 2024 (pursuant to Public Law 18-69). After such transfer, all inquiries pertaining to the account should be directed to the Commonwealth Treasurer.

ARRIOLA, FELICITA B
P.O. BOX 501164
SAIPAN, MP 96950

AVERION, REI JOYCE T
TAMAN, JOVE JENN M
P.O. BOX 503596
SAIPAN, MP 96950

CAMACHO, SIDNEY T
P.O. BOX 502088
SAIPAN, MP 96950

DACOME, RAMON L
P.O. BOX 505575
SAIPAN, MP 96950

DAELO, JENALYN M
P.O. BOX 502673
SAIPAN, MP 96950

ESTATE OF RAMON S CAMACHO
P.O. BOX 502588
SAIPAN, MP 96950

IGITOL, DAVID L
P.O. BOX 5154 CHRB
SAIPAN, MP 96950

KAIPAT, RYAN A
KAIPAT, TARSILA ALEXANDRA P
PMB 363 BOX 10003
SAIPAN, MP 96950

MOORE, JOHN GILBERT
P.O. BOX 500543
SAIPAN, MP 96950

NORTHERN MARIANAS DESCENT CORPORATION
P.O. BOX 5195 CHRB
SAIPAN, MP 96950

PINAULA, ANN MARIE T
1444 SW 344TH PL
FEDERAL WAY, WA 98023

SABLAN JR., GEORGE B
P.O. BOX 503003
SAIPAN, MP 96950

THOMPSON, MERCHANT WILLIAM
THOMPSON, ROSE B
P.O. BOX 35891
JUNEAU, AK 99803-5891

Member FDIC EQUAL HOUSING LENDER

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: DPW24-ITB No.: 42400119

SUBMISSION DATE: August 27, 2024 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"Renovation of Paupau Beach Playground, Saipan."

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE TECHNICAL SERVICES DIVISION, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, LOCATED ON SECOND FLOOR, OLEAI JOETEN COMMERCIAL CENTER, SAN JOSE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

The project package will be available on or after **July 25, 2024** at Technical Services Divi-sion, Department of Public Works, located on Second Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, San Jose, Saipan. A non-refundable payment of **One Hundred Dollars ($100.00)** is required for each set. Payment must be made to the CNMI Teasurer and a receipt of pay-ment must be presented when obtaining the Scope of Work at the DPW Technical Services Division.

There will be a **Pre-bid Conference** for this project on **August 13, 2024, 9:00 a.m., ChST** at the **Paupau Beach Project Site, Saipan.** The Prospective bidders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the site. All question regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than **4:30 p.m, ChST local time on August 20, 2024** to **Mr. Anthony A. Camacho, Director of Technical Services Division,** 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan or fax to (670) 234-3547. Response to questions shall be shared with prospective bidders.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ RAY N. YUMUL
Secretary, DPW

/S/ BRIEN SERS NICHOLAS JR.
Acting Director, Division of Procurement Services

NOTICE OF ZONING BOARD
PUBLIC HEARING

for
Conditional Use
Application #2024-1924
SPP LLC dba RozFx

The Public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board Public Hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. **SPP LLC dba RozFx** proposes to utilize a portion within an existing one-story building with floor area measuring **22' 0" (L) x 21' 6" (W)** for its "Cannabis Manufacturing and Processing" Use. The site is located on **Lot 039 L 50 & 039 L 51** in the village of **Obyan.** This area is zoned as **Rural.**

A public hearing will be held on:

Date: **August 8, 2024**
Time: **2:00 pm**
Place: **Governor's Conference Room, Juan A. Sablan Memorial Building, Capitol Hill, Saipan**

Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office **before 3pm, August 6, 2024**. Please send written comments via e-mail to zoningboard@cnmizoning.com, via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, at 5911 Chalan Pale Arnold, Chalan Laulau (former IT&E).

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq.) and the Amended Saipan Zoning Law of 2013.

/s/ Henry S. Hofschneider, Chairman

NOTICE OF ZONING BOARD
PUBLIC HEARING

for
Conditional Use Permit
#2020-14923
American Xiong's Corporation
dba Angel Market

The Public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board Public Hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. **American Xiong's Corporation dba Angel Market** proposes to amend its previous approved *Conditional Use Permit 2020-3847* to include a new use of Flower/Floral Shop on the ground floor of its existing building & to construct a 2nd floor extension measuring **84' 6" (L) x 40' 6" (W) x 24' (H)** for its *"Single-Family Dwelling"* use. The site is located on **Lot 002 G 16** in the village of **Kagman.** This area is zoned as **Village Residential.**

A public hearing will be held on:

Date: **August 8, 2024**
Time: **2:00 pm**
Place: **Governor's Conference Room, Juan A. Sablan Memorial Building, Capitol Hill, Saipan**

Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office **before 3pm, August 6, 2024.** Please send written comments via e-mail to zoningboard@cnmizoning.com, via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, at 5911 Chalan Pale Arnold, Chalan Laulau (former IT&E).

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq.) and the Amended Saipan Zoning Law of 2013.

/s/ Henry S. Hofschneider, Chairman

CHCC-CGC launches Pediatric Mental Healthcare Access Program

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. Community Guidance Center is proud to announce the successful launch of the Pediatric Mental Healthcare Access Program, a significant step toward addressing the critical shortage of children's mental health services in the CNMI.

Funded in September 2022, the program completed staff onboarding in the summer of 2023 and officially began services on May 20, 2024. This initiative aims to provide vital support and resources to pediatric care providers, enhancing their ability to identify and treat mental health concerns in children and adolescents.

"Our primary goal is to integrate behavioral health services within pediatric primary care clinics," said Jackielyn Westbrook, program manager of the Pediatric Mental Healthcare Access Program. "Historically, there has been a challenge of behavioral health support within these clinics. Many of our doctors, nurses, and providers have identified a need for mental health support, medication management related to mental health, behavioral health training, and therapy. These areas represent a gap in the care we provide," she added.

The Pediatric Mental Healthcare Access Program offers three primary services:

■ Care coordination: Assisting providers with questions or referrals for individual therapy or behavioral health skills training.

■ Training: In partnership with Hawaii Project Echo, delivering comprehensive training to help providers access and utilize behavioral health services unique to the region.

■ Direct service: Providing patients with access to individual therapy and behavioral health skills training. ***(PR)***

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

Commonwealth Zoning Board
Board Meeting

Thursday, August 8, 2024 | 2:00 PM
Governor's Conference Room ● Capitol Hill, Saipan
Tel: 670-234-9661/2 ● Fax: 670-234-9666
E-mail: ZoningBoard@cnmizoning.com

AGENDA

A. Preliminary Matters

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of 08/08/24 Meeting Agenda
4. Adoption of 07/11/24 Meeting Minutes
5. Communications
6. Public Comments *(not for items to be discussed in item B. Public Hearings)*

B. Public Hearings:

1. **Conditional Use Application #2020-14923 – American Xiong's Corporation dba Angel Market** proposes to amend its previous approved *Conditional Use Permit* 2020-3847 to include a new use of Flower/Floral Shop on the ground floor of its existing building and to construct a 2nd floor extension measuring **84' 6" (L) x 40' 6" (W) x 24' (H)** for its *"Single-Family Dwelling"* use. The site is located on **Lot 002 G 16** in the village of **Kagman.** This area is zoned as **Village Residential.**

2. **Conditional Use Application #2024-1924 - SPP LLC dba RozFx** proposes to utilize a portion within an existing one-story building with floor area measuring **22' 0" (L) x 21' 6" (W)** for its "Cannabis Manufacturing and Processing" Use. The site is located on **Lot 039 L 50 & 039 L 51** in the village of **Obyan.** This area is zoned as **Rural**.

C. Old Business

1. Parking regulations in Garapan Core (GC), Garapan East (GE), Village Commercial (VC), and other zoning districts

D. New Business

1. None

E. Report from Zoning Administrator

1. Operations (Permitting and Enforcement)
2. Office Updates
   a. Nuisance Abatement and Blighted Properties Maintenance Act of 2018 Regulation
   b. Proposed Text amendments to the Saipan Zoning Law of 2013

F. Report from Legal Counsel

G. Executive Session

H. Announcements

I. Adjournment

/s/Henry S. Hofschneider, Chairman

ROOM

From page 1

diator between the parties in the ongoing dispute.

According to Palacios, the group of marine operators reached out to his office asking for a chance to tell the administration their side of the issue that has been making headlines for over a week; DPL's proposed amendments to the existing rule and regulations on the use of Mañagaha. (The operators believe that the proposed rules would essentially prohibit them from doing business at Mañagaha.)

"There are a lot of issues that need to be clarified and resolved. The issue stems from the newly proposed rules and regulations that DPL is trying to adopt and they certainly have concerns about it. Since last week, the lieutenant governor and I have been talking about this and we have our concerns. We will be talking to DPL about it," he said.

Palacios expressed that one of his concerns is that with all the CNMI's efforts to boost tourism, Mañagaha has been one of the CNMI's most popular attractions.

"We want to make sure that Mañagaha continues to be an attraction. It's not only a marine sanctuary, it's also a very attractive destination of our Commonwealth and we want to make sure we protect it and continue to protect it for our culture and traditions. We also want to make sure we make it work for everybody, for the concessionaire and for the marine sports operators, as well as visitors and the general public," he said.

Palacios adds that there are issues right now, but he and Apatang intend to fix them.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

SENATE

From page 1

Department of Commerce secretary Remedios C. Mafnas.

Mafnas, who was nominated by Gov. Arnold I. Palacios to serve as Commerce secretary last May 10, appeared before the Senate standing committee along with a large group of supporters (all of whom had nothing but great words to say about her.)

Mafnas, for her part, gave an opening statement regarding her goals and priorities for the department while also answering some questions posed by members of the committee.

After over an hour-long hearing, the Senate Standing Committee took Mafnas' testimony into consideration as they deliberate on whether to recommend her nomination to the entire Senate floor.

Mafnas, in her remarks, stated that as secretary of commerce, her priority is streamlining Commerce's processes to further help existing and future businesses.

"My role expands beyond oversight of departmental functions in order to achieve the economic goals set by the current administration. Once confirmed, I will prioritize straitening our business climate through collaboration, balance, and data driven decision making. My priorities include collaborating with the Commonwealth Economic Development Authority, [Saipan, Tinian, and Rota] Chamber of Commerce, and other stakeholders to promote economic development as well as keeping the businesses that are here now. Ensuring a balanced approach to domestic enterprise and foreign investment, providing access to local resources for new and existing businesses, [and] supporting our statistical capacity in enhancing data driven decision making," she said.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

214%

From page 1

The home-delivered meals program, Manglona said, has seen a significant increase in the *man'amko* signing up due to their successful outreach efforts. The demand demonstrates the importance of nutritional support for seniors in the CNMI.

"By effectively disseminating information about our services, we have successfully reached more seniors in need. This increased demand highlights the critical need for nutritional assistance among our senior population in the CNMI. Our office remains committed to providing essential support and is always ready to assist in any way possible."

In all, Manglona said there are currently 716 Office on Aging congregants in the CNMI (Saipan, Tinian, and Rota), including 90 active individuals who visit the Office on Aging center on Saipan, 49 active individuals on Tinian, and 42 active individuals on Rota.

While for homebound congregants, 42 are on Tinian and 26 are on Rota.

Since 2010, the total number of *man'amkos* served by the Office on Aging has increased nearly 131% from 310 four years ago, according to Manglona.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

PETITION

From page 1

governor Juan Nekai Babauta, officially filed his petition for re-election at the Commonwealth Election Commission officiating his run for another term in the Senate.

Apatang, in his statement, said he supports another term for Manglona.

"I'm here to join Sen. Manglona in his petition to run again for Rota's Senator. I'm asking the people of Rota to please, vote and support him. We need him back in the Senate," he said.

Babauta said it is important to keep Manglona for another term as he is well versed in the issues Rota faces today and has proven to be a strong representative of the island.

"I'm here to show Sen. Manglona my support and to the voters, we need to keep Sen. Manglona for another term. I feel it is important that we have this continuity with somebody like Sen. Manglona who has the experience and knowledge of current issues. He's a man of compassion and he understands the issues both from micro to macro level and it's important we keep him in the Senate to represent the people of Rota," he said.

For his part, Manglona said his record speaks for itself and he believes that his hard work and devotion to the people of Rota throughout his years of service can be seen through it.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

MGT

From page 3

that in time they can provide high-demand instruments for students.

"They deserve it and the world deserves to hear our talents from the CNMI," said Reyes. "We're collaborating with several community partners and agencies, so this is going to be a collaborative effort to ensure that music education is back into the system."

The team also shared that under Save the Music Foundation, *Voices of the Marianas* will have a new twist as the team prepares to not only provide a space to share talent but also have former contestants involved to provide mentorship to new contestants.

"For the competition, it's not just to compete, but you got a stellar group of people that have a skill set like no other to kind of prepare them. I want to say that this is a prerequisite to get them prepared for the bigger stage," said Donovan Castro.

Dwayne Castro added, "I do feel like the CNMI has potential to get out there on the mainstream. And like what Don was saying earlier, this a prerequisite to get them out there. That's all we're doing. It's a competition in the end. Yeah, we boil it down, but we still work as a family to get you to where you need to be to get on that platform. That's the main goal."

Reyes noted that all their social media platforms and website will soon assume the name *Voices of the Marianas*. She also shared that plans are underway to create a new and separate website focused on highlighting the talents of the Marianas from individuals near and far who call the Marianas home. With currently eight confirmed contestants registered for the Season 2, the opportunity is still open and those interested are encouraged to register.

For more information about the *Voices of the Marianas* and the Save the Music Foundation, call (670) 285-9211 or email them at savethemusicfoundation.cnmi@gmail.com.

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The funds from these accounts are scheduled to be transferred to the Commonwealth Treasurer during the month of October 2024. This is in compliance with the amendment to Section 20-20.4-015 of the Northern Mariana Islands Administrative Code Title 20 Department of Commerce Regulations. If your name is listed, please contact the Customer Consultant or Service Manager at First Hawaiian Bank's Oleai Branch as soon as possible.

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LEZANDRA MIYUKI JAVAN TAKAYAMA
P O BOX 500127
SAIPAN MP 96950-0127

LIBERTY F SAYSON
P O BOX 504776
SAIPAN MP 96950-4308

LING LING JI
PMB 1788 BOX 10002
SAIPAN MP 96950-8902

LINGNU FU
P O BOX 502648
SAIPAN MP 96950-2648

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LUISITO M PACONLA
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SAIPAN MP 96950-5017

M R CORPORATION
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SAIPAN MP 96950-4333

MA JAIME M NAVARRO
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SAIPAN MP 96950-3944

MACCO LLC
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P O BOX 520778
TINIAN MP 96952

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SAIPAN MP 96950-0815

MARIA C SANTOS TTEE
IGNACIO MANUEL KAIPAT SANTOS BNF
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SAIPAN MP 96950-4338

MARIA LUISA R MATEO
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SAIPAN MP 96950-8905

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SAIPAN MP 96950-3136

MARIA SOPHIA G HERAS
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MARIAH REENAE N DE LEON
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MARIANAS PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION INC
P O BOX 5449 CHRB
SAIPAN MP 96950-5449

MARILYN D MANALO
P O BOX 7928 SVRB
SAIPAN MP 96950-7928

MARILYN M TABAT
P O BOX 503317
SAIPAN MP 96950-3317

MARIO FRANCIS VALENTINO
P O BOX 500487
SAIPAN MP 96950-0487

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PMB 301-C P O BOX 10003
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SAIPAN MP 96950-3980

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P O BOX 500797
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P O BOX 500805
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MICHAEL E VELASQUEZ
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MIKI S MORALES
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MIN SOO KIM
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SAIPAN MP 96950-4319

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PAUL T CRUZ
ROSEMARIE O CRUZ
P O BOX 501866
SAIPAN MP 96950-1866

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The funds from these accounts are scheduled to be transferred to the Commonwealth Treasurer during the month of October 2024. This is in compliance with the amendment to Section 20-20.4-015 of the Northern Mariana Islands Administrative Code Title 20 Department of Commerce Regulations. If your name is listed, please contact the Customer Consultant or Service Manager at First Hawaiian Bank's Oleai Branch as soon as possible.

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NATHAN BENSON
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SAIPAN MP 96950-8900

RENATO T SY
PMB 425 BOX 10000
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ROBERTO JR VISPERAS VITO
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SAIPAN MP 96950-3742

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RODEL S LAURENARIA
PMB 181 BOX 10001
SAIPAN MP 96950-8901

ROLANDO TRINIDAD VICENTE
P O BOX 505365
SAIPAN MP 96950-4318

RONA GANDY R ATIENZA
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SAIPAN MP 96950-2941

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SAIPAN MP 96950-2094

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JOHN OLIVER DLR GONZALES
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SAIPAN MP 96950-5557

RYAN D CASTILLO
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SAIPAN MP 96950-0714

RYLAN KLYDE CAMACHO TANGCOY
P O BOX 500115
SAIPAN MP 96950-0115

S T R CO LTD
P O BOX 501292
SAIPAN MP 96950-1292

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NO 51 GROUP 12 NORTH DISTRICT OF
TIANDUOLI VILLAGE YANGSHE TOWN
ZHANGJIAGANG CITY SUZHOU CITY

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SNN GENERAL CONSTRUCTOR CONSTRUCTION
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KANAGAWA JAPAN 215-0036

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SAIPAN MP 96950-5556

TERESITA E CACHO
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SAIPAN MP 96950-5855

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P O BOX 503006
SAIPAN MP 96950-3006

TIMOTHY ENCI YU
P O BOX 10001 PMB 995
SAIPAN MP 96950-8901

TING CHEN
PMB 149 P O BOX 10001
SAIPAN MP 96950-8901

TINIAN SHIPPING SERVICES LLC
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SAIPAN MP 96950-4324

TITO M SABLAN DBA
TMSABLAN COMPANY
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TOKU SUDO
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MIKIKO MARTIN
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SAIPAN MP 96950-8900

WILFREDO V PANGANIBAN
PMB 197 P O BOX 10000
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SAIPAN MP 96950-4303

XINYING LI
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SAIPAN MP 96950-8900

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ZALDY P QUEBRAL
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ZINAIDA DERIDOVICH
DANIIL DERIDOVICH
VLADIVOSTOK RUSSIA

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Member FDIC

GMS Summer Culmination Event celebrates talent and creativity

The Green Meadow School Summer Culmination Event, held on July 26, 2024, at the Saipan World Resort's Royal Taga Hall, commenced with inspiring opening remarks from principal Milagros Songcuan.

Songcuan highlighted the importance of fostering creativity and confidence in students from a young age, setting a positive tone for the day's festivities. This year's summer program Green Meadow School welcomed students from a variety of schools both from the public and private sector creating a creative synergy amongst the students.

The first part of the event, themed "Movie Night," featured enchanting song and dance performances by our spirited preschool students, who were joined by their enthusiastic teachers. Dressed in vibrant costumes, the young performers brought to life popular movies such as "Trolls," "Barbie," "Lilo and Stitch," "Frozen," "Super Mario," and "Minions." Their captivating performances filled the hall with joy and excitement, showcasing their budding talents and the creativity fostered at Green Meadow School.

The second part of the event was a mesmerizing play, "Aladdin," performed by GMS' talented elementary and middle school students. Directed by the dedicated middle school teacher, Lorein Soriano, the play was a testament to the students' acting prowess and the collaborative efforts of the entire school community. The enchanting tale of Aladdin and his adventures kept the audience spellbound, reflecting the high standards of performance and artistic expression upheld by Green Meadow School.

GMS

The second part of Green Meadow School's Summer Culmination Event held last July 26 at the Saipan World Resort's Royal Taga Hall was the play, "Aladdin," performed by GMS' talented elementary and middle school students.

The event concluded with heartfelt closing remarks from GMS president Glenn Songcuan. Songcuan expressed pride in the students' achievements and gratitude to the teachers and parents for their unwavering support.

The Green Meadow School Summer Culmination Event was a resounding success, celebrating the vibrant talents of our students and the dedication of our educators. The young talents were applauded by the parents, family and staff in attendance. Several parents have expressed their gratitude and thanks for making such a memorable summer and event for their children. We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed to making this event a memorable celebration of our school's artistic spirit.

For more information, contact Green Meadow School (670) 235-2185 or visit their business office in the main campus in Chalan Kiya from Monday to Friday from 8am to 5:30pm. The new Chalan Kanoa campus is open for enrollment for both daycare and K5 to 8th grade. ***(PR)***

BANK OF SAIPAN
MARIANAS PRIDE

DORMANT DEPOSIT ACCOUNTS

The Dormant Deposit Accounts listed below are currently held at the Bank of Saipan and have been inactive. If you believe you have a claim to any of these accounts, please make your claim at the Chalan Lau Lau Main Branch of Bank of Saipan before October 1, 2024.

Pursuant to Public Law 18-69, any unclaimed deposits remaining from this list after October 1, 2024, will be paid to the "CNMI TREASURER" and delivered to the Department of Commerce, Banking Division. Therefore, any claims made after October 1, 2024 must be made at the CNMI Department of Commerce, Banking Division.

JING LI
PO BOX 10003 PMB 167
SAIPAN, MP 96950

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PO BOX 5806 CHR
SAIPAN, MP 96950

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SAIPAN, MP 96950

MARTIN A MANGLONA
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SAIPAN, MP 96950

H & C INTERNATIONAL, LLC
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SAIPAN, MP 96950

SINORAIN CORPORATION
SYSTEM EXPRESS
PMB 38 BOX 10003
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ROMAN R TORWAL
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AND ELECT MANNY
GREGORY T CASTRO
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MABELLE T SUBANG
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SAIPAN, MP 96950

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SAIPAN, MP 96950

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SAIPAN, MP 96950

BO FEI LI
PMB 1284 BOX 10002
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NOTICE OF SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) Board of Directors hereby gives notice that a special Board of Directors meeting is being called on Friday, August 2, 2024, at 2:00 p.m. in the Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting (ARFF) Classroom at the Airport Fire Station at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, Saipan. The following items are on the agenda for the above referenced meeting:

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS:
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda

II. PUBLIC COMMENT(S)

III. SPECIAL MEETING ITEM(S):
1. Comptroller Contract
2. Supplemental Budget Request: Saipan Airport Air-conditioning Unit
3. Star Marianas Air

IV. MISCELLANEOUS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

V. ADJOURNMENT

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the above agenda items. A time limit may be imposed. Video Conferencing is also available via Zoom.
Zoom link: Meeting ID: 898 0318 0837 Passcode: 573227

JOSE C. AYUYU
Chairman, Board of Directors

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

PROJECT NO. CPA-RFP-008-24-(REPACKAGED)
SUBMISSION DATE: AUGUST 15, 2024: 2:00 P.M.

"SUPPLY & DELIVERY OF AUTOMOTIVE DIESEL OIL AND JET A1 FUEL"

THE BID PACKAGE AND OTHER CONTRACT CONSIDERATIONS IS AVAILABLE FOR PICK UP BEGINNING JULY 16, 2024 AT THE ACCOUNTING DEPARTMENT, COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY, 2ND FLOOR, DEPARTURE BUILDING, FRANCISCO C. ADA/SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT UPON PAYMENT OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE FEE OF $100. PAYMENT SHALL BE MADE IN CASH, CASHIER'S CHECK, CREDIT CARD, OR U.S. POSTAL MONEY ORDER. ALL APPLICANTS SHALL PAY THE $100.00 TO RECEIVE A COPY OF THE BID.

BIDDERS ARE TO SUBMIT ONE (1) ORIGINAL AND TWO (2) COPIES IN A SEALED ENVELOPE AND MARKED "SUPPLY & DELIVERY OF AUTOMOTIVE DIESEL OIL AND JET A1 FUEL **(RFP-008-24-REPACKAGED)**" TO THE OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, 2ND FLOOR, ARRIVAL BUILDING, FRANCISCO C. ADA/SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ON OR BEFORE 2:00 P.M., AUGUST 15, 2024. BIDDERS SHALL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATIONS ALL CHARGES ASSOCIATED WITH THIS PROCUREMENT BEFORE FINALIZING ITS BID PRICE.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CPA PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION §40-50-1020 AND 1025 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CPA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF CPA.

LEO B. TUDELA
Executive Director

Date: July 16, 2024

Business

TRI-ISLAND TRAINING SUCCESS:

USDA SBIR/STTR Program engages, empowers CNMI small businesses

The Small Business Development Center of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Island proudly announces the successful completion of a tri-island training series on the USDA Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer Programs. The training sessions were held to introduce these programs to SBDC clients and the wider community, emphasizing their potential benefits for small businesses in rural areas.

The training series kicked off on July 11, 2024, on Tinian, hosted by the Tinian SBDC at the Tinian Northern Marianas College Center. Tammi Neville, program specialist for the USDA SBIR Program, led the training via Zoom, providing a comprehensive overview of the program's opportunities. The second session took place on July 18 on Rota, at the Rota NMC Center, where Melinda Coffman, USDA SBIR Program coordinator, led the training. Coffman then concluded the training series on July 26 on Saipan, at the NMC As Terlaje Campus. Tori Swann, USDA SBIR-ICF Next Outreach Support, was present at all three trainings to provide additional support and resources.

SBDC

Tinian training attendees alongside SBDC staff, first two on left, Benjamin Huk Borja, Tinian SBDC director; and Roman Tudela, CNMI SBDC Marketing manager. Last on right, Nadine Deleon Guerrero, CNMI SBDC Network director.

Daisy Demapan, owner of El Bishu/Bishu Marianas from the Saipan session shared, "This is a very good opportunity and I felt that Melinda Coffman was responsive to the unique questions and challenges some of us had. I am grateful for the resources they provided and their examples regarding the funding. The most challenging part for my business is the research component so I look forward to hearing back and seeing what innovations can be funded." In regards to the opportunities that SBDC has been providing to the community, Demapan added, "I really appreciate SBDC for making this training more accessible and I encourage more small business owners and farmers and ranchers to see how they can grow their businesses."

The USDA SBIR/STTR programs are federal initiatives designed to support small businesses in conducting innovative research and development with the potential for commercialization. These programs provide funding to support early-stage research and development in agriculture, rural development, and other areas of national priority. The goal is to foster technological innovation and to help small businesses grow and thrive, particularly in underserved and rural areas like the CNMI.

SBDC

Saipan training attendees alongside Roman Tudela, CNMI SBDCN Marketing manager, last on back left.

Mercilynn K. Palec, CNMI SBDC Network associate director, commented, "The USDA SBIR/STTR programs are a game-changer for small businesses in the CNMI. These programs not only provide crucial funding but also open doors to partnerships and commercialization opportunities. We're excited to see the impact these programs will have on our local economy and the growth of our small business community."

The CNMI SBDC Network is committed to supporting local entrepreneurs and small businesses through training, resources, and networking opportunities. The success of this tri-island training series underscores the value of these efforts and the potential of the USDA SBIR/STTR programs to drive economic development in the region.

For more information about the USDA SBIR/STTR programs or to learn how to get involved, contact the CNMI SBDC Network at (670) 237-6888 or cnmisbdc@marianas.edu and follow them on social media at @cnmisbdc on Instagram or CNMI Small Business Development Center on Facebook.

The CNMI SBDC Network promotes a business-friendly economic infrastructure in the community, builds entrepreneurial capacity and financial literacy within that community, and provides current and nascent small businesses with the technical assistance, counseling, training, and support they need to innovate, adapt, and grow.

The CNMI Small Business Development Center Network Network comprises the CNMI SBDC lead center located in Saipan, the Rota SBDC, and Tinian SBDC. The CNMI SBDC Network is partially funded by a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration and the Northern Marianas College. All opinions, conclusions, or recommendations expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the SBA. Requests for reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities will be made if requested at least two weeks in advance. Language assistance services are available for limited English proficient individuals with at least two weeks advance notice. For arrangements, contact the local SBDC at P. O. Box 501250 Saipan, MP 96950, Tel: (670) 237-6888, or email SBDC Administrative Office manager Adelpha Magofna adelpha.magofna@marianas.edu. Services are extended to the public on a non-disciplinary basis. ***(PR)***

Bank of Hawai'i

NOTICE OF INACTIVE BANK ACCOUNTS

The following checking and savings accounts have been inactive for six months or more with Bank of Hawaii. The account owners should immediately contact Bank of Hawaii Gualo Rai Branch at (670) 322-4200. Otherwise, the funds of each inactive account will be transferred to the CNMI Treasurer by October 1, 2024 (pursuant to Public Law 18-69, Section 4(b), The Commonwealth Escheatment Act of 2013 (The "Act") and Department of Commerce regulations at NMAC20-20.4. After such transfer, all inquiries pertaining to the account should be directed to the Office of Banking Division, Commonwealth Department of Commerce.

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EDITORIAL

Another crisis for Israel and potentially a big test for Biden

Israeli officials long have known they have a big problem on their northern border with Lebanon, a bigger problem, from their perspective, than the situation in Gaza, which many moderates see as likely to resolve itself in time through a cease-fire that gets extended, whatever the absolutist and impractical official position about totally eradicating Hamas.

The Israeli border with Lebanon already is a no-go zone with tens of thousands of Israelis, those living closest, having been evacuated to hotels in and around Tel Aviv, some at the government's expense and others (mostly those in a geographic band a little farther away) at their own.

An argument is made that this ongoing situation represents a de facto shrinking of the state of Israel itself. But the real issue here, we've been told, is that Israel views the capabilities of the Lebanese group Hezbollah as so much greater than that of Hamas. The militant organization, after all, is reported to have more than 100,000 rockets in its arsenal and tens of thousands of willing combatants.

That's why the rocket attack Saturday on the Druze village of Majdal Shams in the Israeli-controlled Golan Heights, which killed 12 children of that Arabic-speaking religious and ethnic group, while they were playing on a soccer field near their home, is especially worrying.

Israel blamed Hezbollah; the Iran-funded and equipped group has denied responsibility. Hezbollah and Israel have been skirmishing for months but this is the worst loss of life within Israel since October. (The deaths of Palestinians in Gaza have, of course, occurred at an exponentially larger number.) Israel has been striking back, but many Middle East watchers now fear an all-out war between Israel and Hezbollah.

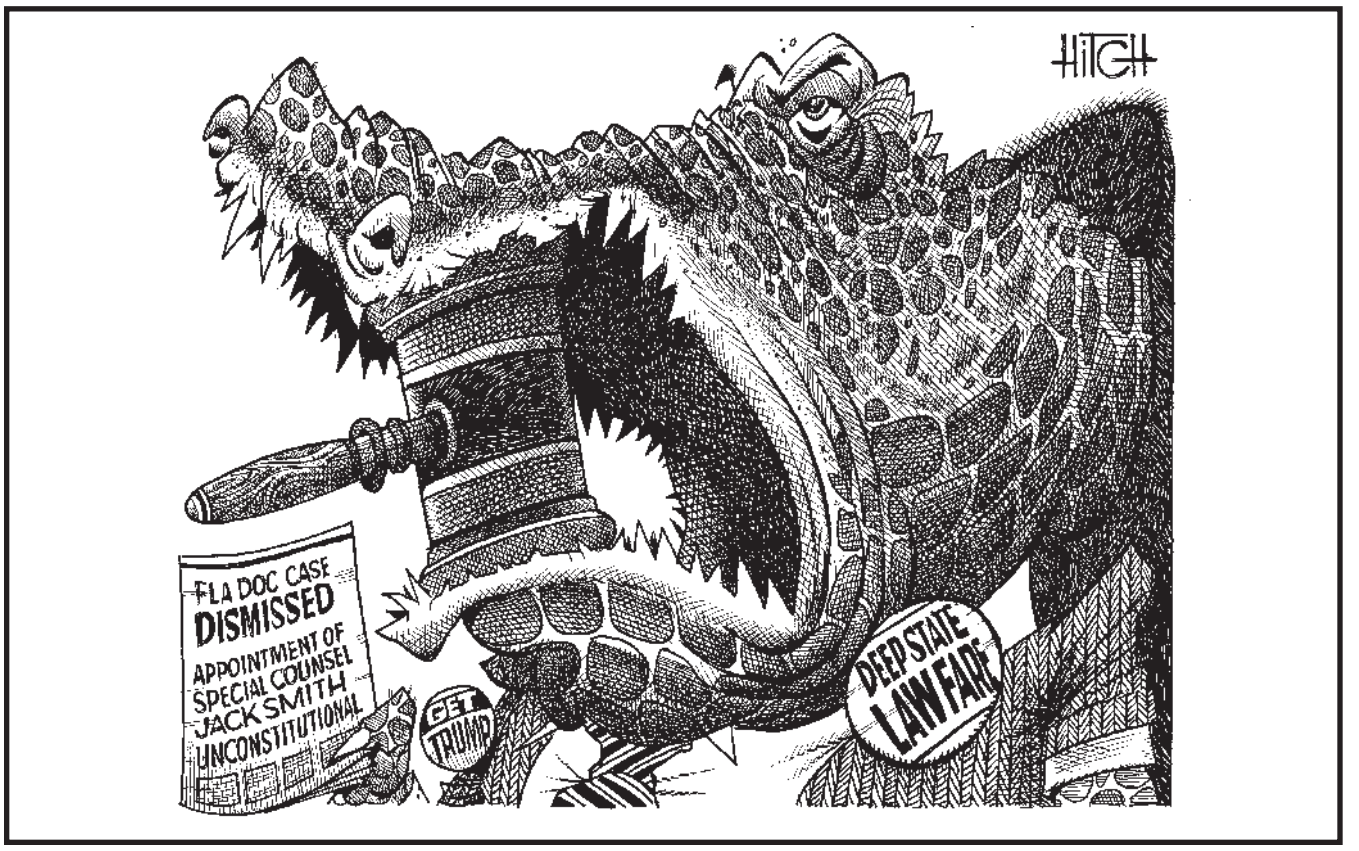
That's not a new concern, but the weekend's events amped up the danger.

When Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, unpopular with Democrats, addressed Congress last Wednesday, excluding those members who chose not to show up, he found a legislative body distracted by the drama in the upcoming presidential election.

The Middle East is not an easy issue for Democrats who have proved themselves effective in recent days as squelching internal debate and dissent. President Joe Biden said Monday that he was calling for major changes in the U.S. Supreme Court, including terms limits and ethics reform, an easy issue for Democrats to promote, as well as a constitutional amendment aimed at limiting the broad presidential immunity that the justices approved—another easy issue for Democrats to promote, if not to actually pass.

These proposed reforms are designed in part to boost support for Kamala Harris, Biden's replacement at the top of the Democratic ticket, and energize the progressive base. Biden even has used the phrase "limiting the court," which should give any level-headed person pause.

See ANOTHER on Page 13



Gun violence is destroying the soul of Chicago and America

By WILLIE WILSON
Chicago Tribune

Willie Wilson is a business owner, philanthropist and former mayoral candidate.

Last month, Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy declared gun violence a public health crisis. Surprisingly, this is the first advisory on gun violence ever issued by the surgeon general's office. The advisory report acknowledges the devastating impact of gun violence on families and the increase in firearm-related suicide, especially among younger people.

In 1995, I experienced the agony of losing a child to gun violence. There is no pain on earth like losing a son or daughter in that way. A part of me went down in the grave with my son. In 2022, more than 48,000 people died from firearm-related injuries, according to the surgeon general's report.

Over the Fourth of July weekend in Chicago, more than 100 people were shot and 19 killed. Last week, mail carrier Octavia Redmond was gunned down during the day while delivering mail on the Far South Side. The level of gun violence in Chicago is destroying the soul of our city and nation. According to national data for 2023 from the nonprofit Gun Violence Archive, 300 children age 11 and younger were killed by guns as well as 1,406 victims between the ages of 12 and 17. The trauma and mental health anguish imposed on families and residents is insufferable. A 2022 study by Everytown for Gun Safety found gun violence costs the country $557 billion annually.

Mayor Brandon Johnson, during a news conference with police leadership after the Fourth of July violence, said he was heartbroken and there would be consequences for those "wreaking havoc on my streets." Johnson's words have not slowed the ferocity of gun violence in the city. The Black community is being decimated by guns while Black elected leaders turn a blind eye to lives cut short too soon. They eloquently shout "enough is enough," but the violence continues unabated on their watch—shattering the hopes and dreams of those wrapped in the darkness of poverty.

"Black persons endured the highest ageadjusted firearm homicide rates across all ages," the surgeon general's report revealed. Black people make up 29% of the population in Chicago, but more than 70% of the shootings over the Fourth of July weekend happened in Black-majority communities. Two researchers recently found that if you were a young man living in Garfield Park in 2020 or 2021, your risk of dying by firearm violence was three times greater than the risk faced by troops in Afghanistan and four times greater than the risk of combat death in Iraq, they wrote in an op-ed for the Tribune last year.

Most Chicago City Council members have raised their pay to $145,974. They have failed at their most basic responsibility—the safety of their constituents. The violence in Chicago does not respect age or gender—babies, teenagers, senior citizens and women are victims.

Gov. J.B. Pritzker recently announced a $100 million investment by civic and business leaders to curtail surging gun violence. I applaud the business community for stepping up. However, throwing money at this problem without accountability measures for ensuring the resources reach those most in need is counterproductive. Black and brown children living in poverty are at a significant disadvantage. Their parents lack the economic security to provide for a good education.

There is an African proverb that says, "The ruin of a nation begins in the homes of its people." Growing up in Louisiana, my siblings and I were accountable to my mother and father. We were taught right from wrong at an early age. There was discipline, and that is missing.

The following are a few suggestions to reduce gun violence:

Johnson should allow law enforcement to do its job. Provide police officers the resources they need to prevent and solve crimes. Strictly enforce the law.

Pritzker, Johnson and Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle should coordinate resources and direct economic empowerment tools to areas with the highest crime and poverty. Create a fund to allow citizens to access capital for new businesses.

Business leaders should provide entrepreneurship opportunities to residents from high crime ZIP codes.

Labor unions should target training and apprenticeship opportunities to high crime ZIP codes.

Johnson should use sister agencies such as the CTA to provide contracts and job opportunities for high-crime areas.

The U.S. attorney general should prosecute more gun cases, such as those targeting postal workers.

Elected leaders must apply common sense to deal with gun violence. Too many guns are flowing into the hands of people who should not have them. Democrats, Republicans and independents should find common ground on sensible restrictions and background checks. In September, President Joe Biden created the first-ever White House Office of Gun Violence Prevention. Perhaps their work will help save the soul of America.

I write this commentary to make those comfortable with high numbers of Americans being shot and killed uncomfortable.

Venezuela needs its neighbors' help more than ever

By JUAN PABLO SPINETTO
Bloomberg Opinion

JP Spinetto is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist covering Latin American business, economic affairs and politics. He was previously Bloomberg News' managing editor for economics and government in the region.

Of all the different scenarios in Venezuela's election on Sunday, we witnessed the most likely one: Nicolás Maduro was announced as the winner of the vote by the country's electoral authority controlled by the authoritarian president's close allies.

Shortly past midnight in Caracas, the National Electoral Council said that Maduro got 51% of the vote compared with 44% for rival Edmundo González, despite polls showing the opposition candidate clearly ahead by double-digit margins.

The electoral body didn't produce the individual tallies from each voting station to support such a result after saying it received a "terrorist" attack on its transmission systems. How inconvenient! It also called the result "irreversible" even if 20% of the votes were still uncounted and the difference between both candidates was just seven percentage points. Equally suspicious, it took them more than six hours to release the count; you would think that a result so unexpectedly favorable to the government would have been published very quickly to squash any malign speculation.

The opposition denounced the result for what it is: a farce that only crowns a process tainted from the beginning, with its main leader María Corina Machado saying that based on the 40% of the tabulated ballots they had managed to secure, Gonzalez was winning 70% of the vote.

With both sides claiming victory, the short-term outlook is increased political instability and uncertainty. Latin America and the countries that want to see a democratic and prosperous Venezuela should get involved fast to help find a path that respects the will of the millions of citizens who braved obstruction and violence to cast their vote.

Maduro was never going to accept defeat, and the idea he would quietly exit the presidential palace was always wishful thinking. At the same time, his strategy can't be confused with strength or invincibility: It's a bet consistent with the hegemonic behavior of Chavismo, the socialist movement that has governed Venezuela for more than 25 years, and one that nonetheless contains several risks for the regime.

For a start, the electoral body has to show the tallies proving the result (the CNE pledged to do it the "coming hours"). This is key because at this moment only Venezuela's most staunch allies (i.e., Cuba, Nicaragua, Bolivia, Iran, Russia and China) have congratulated Maduro for his "victory."

And if it's true that the opposition certified 40% of the votes, that should be enough to prove the numbers don't add up. As Chilean President Gabriel Boric rightly said, the results are "difficult to believe," adding that his country wouldn't recognize unverifiable outcomes. The U.S. and the European Union expressed similar concerns.

While the silence of Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and his Colombia counterpart Gustavo Petro on Sunday night can be interpreted as a tactical concession, it could also be a sign of backdoor diplomatic negotiations. (Colombia's foreign minister, Luis Gilberto Murillo, subsequently called for a speedy independent verification and audit.) Petro (and Mexico's Andrés Manuel López Obrador, the region's other big leftist leader) are unlikely to come out harshly against Maduro, but Lula vented his frustration with the Venezuelan leader days before the vote. And his foreign affairs adviser Celso Amorim was in Caracas for the vote. Brazil's position will carry significant weight in this drama, where the already-damaged legitimacy of the regime is shrinking even further.

And then we have Venezuela's armed forces, which should be now making their own calculations. Machado appealed to the military once again on Sunday night, saying she expected them to enforce the popular vote. Although she said her movement is peaceful, the opposition's capacity to mobilize protestors if needed shouldn't be dismissed.

All in all, these are treacherous waters for Chavismo that could lead to renewed sanctions—both personally and on a government level — more isolation and internal disagreement that could upend Maduro's artificial economic stability. Not for nothing did the bling-encrusted leader call for a "new consensus" within the country in his post-election remarks. And if the 11 years in power of this bus-driver-turned-dictator have taught us anything, it is not to underestimate his survival capacity. The next step in this story will depend on how the government and the opposition play their new hands.

For those still doubting last night's results, let's not forget this wasn't your typical election even before Sunday's blunders. The regime went to extreme lengths to tilt the balance of the vote in its favor, banning candidates (Machado, most notably,) allowing only a tiny margin of the Venezuelan diaspora to vote abroad, suppressing the presence of observers and even barring the entrance of regional leaders seeking to assess the vote in the country. That's enough to be considered an unfair election in any democracy.

The spectacle of millions of courageous and hopeful Venezuelans at home and abroad trying to change their country's fate peacefully should be a source of global inspiration. In this year of elections, it should mobilize democracies to summon the collective ingenuity and resolve needed to defend the primacy of ballots over truncheons and bullets. Venezuela's democratic neighbors must stand up, and the rest of the free world must support them.

Can Kamala Harris and an army of 'childless cat ladies' overcome Republicans' sexism?

By ROBIN ABCARIAN
Los Angeles Times

Do MAGA Republicans hear themselves?

Earlier this month, as he speculated on Newsmax about how Vice President Kamala Harris might perform as the Democratic presidential nominee, the reliably noxious Donald Trump supporter Sebastian Gorka dismissed her in the most offensive way, using the abbreviation for "diversity, equity and inclusion" programs.

"She's a DEI hire, right? She's a woman. She's colored," he said, adding sarcastically, "Therefore, she's got to be good."

The 20-year-old chairwoman of Hawaii Young Republicans piled on, suggesting on Instagram that Harris would be more effective in the White House kitchen than in the Oval Office. "I can see how some would view my words as misogynistic or sexist, but it's simply a joke," explained Rocklin Youngstrom—unaware, perhaps, that her post could be all three without being funny.

"Low IQ Kamala" is how the "Official War Room account of the 2024 Trump campaign" described Harris on the social media platform X.

And Trump rallies have long featured merch with the slogan "Joe and the Ho gotta go."

I assume this outpouring of super-classy behavior is what led Republican leaders to warn GOP members of Congress to refrain from "overtly racist and sexist attacks" on Harris.

"This election will be about policies and not personalities," Speaker Mike Johnson told reporters after a closed-door meeting with House Republicans on Tuesday. "This is not personal with regard to Kamala Harris, and her ethnicity or her gender have nothing to do with this whatsoever."

Now, I'm just spitballing here, but if you have to instruct your political allies to avoid sexist and racist rhetoric against the first woman of color to head a major presidential ticket, doesn't your party have a sexism and racism problem?

And if you are urging them to forswear only overt attacks, does that mean you are fine with more nuanced ones? Is it overtly sexist or racist when Trump calls Harris a "nasty woman," a "radical-left lunatic" and "dumb as a rock"? Or when he constantly butchers her first name (properly pronounced "comma-la") and claims she "shouldn't even be allowed to run"?

Trump's running mate, Ohio Sen. J.D. Vance, must not have gotten Johnson's memo. Last week, he evoked the despicable Reagan-era caricature of the Black welfare queen to describe Harris, a former San Francisco district attorney, California attorney general and United States senator.

"What the hell have you done other than collect a government check for the past 20 years?" he demanded of the vice president during his first solo campaign rally.

Former Trump advisor Kellyanne Conway declared on Fox News that Harris "does not speak well. She does not work hard."

It's been kind of fun watching Vance's missteps in his early outings as Trump's vice presidential nominee, which has led to speculation that Trump must be having a serious case of buyer's remorse.

The internet caught fire after Hillary Clinton resurfaced a 2021 clip of Vance telling Tucker Carlson that Democrats such as Harris and New York Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez are "a bunch of childless cat ladies who are miserable at their own lives and the choices that they've made and so they want to make the rest of the country miserable too." By contrast, he said, those meeting his narrow definition of parents "who go home at night and see the face of a smiling kid, whatever their profession, I think they're happier, I think they're healthier, and they're going to be better prepared to actually lead this country."

It takes a special kind of cluelessness to simultaneously slam women who don't have kids and cat lovers. Vance's bizarre fetishization of parenthood—he has suggested parents should have more votes than people who don't have kids—is already backfiring. Once his cat lady comments were out of the bag, a 2023 Time magazine "Person of the Year" cover featuring the childless Taylor Swift with her cat Benjamin Button around her neck went viral. One of Harris' two stepchildren and their mother also rebuked Vance's inaccurate attack on the vice president.

Even the childless Jennifer Aniston, who only occasionally dips into politics, weighed in Wednesday on Instagram. "I truly can't believe this is coming from a potential VP of the United States," she wrote. And, alluding to Vance's vote against ensuring access to in vitro fertilization, she added, "Mr. Vance, I pray that your daughter is fortunate enough to bear children of her own one day. I hope she will not need to turn to IVF as a second option. Because you are trying to take that away from her, too."

Democratic campaign consultant Tim Hogan described the Trump-Vance campaign on CNN recently as "a testosterone ticket that I think is going to explode the gender gap in this election."

It's too early for polls to determine whether that is true. Harris' flawless debut as the probable Democratic nominee is bound to give way to a misstep here or there. That's just how campaigns work.

And the torrent of racism and sexism that has already flowed from Trump and his supporters will surely continue to inundate us between now and election day. We can be grateful at least that the race has just 100 days to go.

ANOTHER

From page 13

But the Middle East does not pause for election cycles nor political conventions, and it could well be that Biden will have to deal with a much tougher issue for Democrats while he remains president. And it's worth noting that Harris was one of the people who did not show up to hear Netanyahu.

We urge Israeli restraint, given that Netanyahu's ultimate response to the shocking attack on kids—which may have landed in error; we don't know—will determine the likelihood of further loss of life. But already, the situation was serious enough for airlines such as Lufthansa and Royal Jordanian to cancel flights to Beirut and for governments, including the U.S., to issue a phalanx of warnings about the increased dangers in Lebanon.

Democrats have said that Biden is fully capable and engaged as the sitting president.

There will be a lot left to do, not all of it reflecting how the president would choose to spend his time.

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Nation

FOR GOING TO BATTLE WITH TRUMP

Harris calibrating policy pitch

WASHINGTON (AP)—Vice President Kamala Harris is facing the delicate task of calibrating her policy pitch to American voters, a standard task for any White House hopeful but one that comes with additional challenges this year.

First, Harris is running for president while serving under President Joe Biden, meaning she's linked to anything that happened—or will happen—on his watch. She inherits accomplishments like limiting the cost of insulin but also the administration's struggle to prevent illegal border crossings.

Second, Harris has baggage from her own failed campaign for president before she became Biden's running mate four years ago. During that Democratic primary, she backed an array of progressive proposals that Republicans have highlighted to paint her as "dangerously liberal."

Harris has already disavowed some of her earlier positions, such as a ban on fracking and support for single-payer healthcare. And she's pledging to keep some of Biden's promises, including no tax increases on anyone making less than $400,000 a year.

That means Harris' path to the White House could depend on her ability to chart a course toward the country's future while being selective about her past. Success will mean keeping Democrats united behind her vision while keeping the focus on Republican candidate Donald Trump's record of undermining abortion rights and his challenges to democratic traditions.

Everything will have to happen at unprecedented speed because Harris was abruptly thrust into the spotlight after Biden decided to drop his reelection bid a little more than a week ago. Her newly designed campaign website doesn't even include a policy section.

"You're building the plane while you're flying it," said Bakari Sellers, a Harris ally who co-chaired her campaign four years ago.

Sellers said Harris should make sure to focus on bread-and-butter issues like medical debt.

"You can see the history she represents. You can hear that in her voice," Sellers said. "But you still have to attract voters who don't know who you are, who don't subscribe to the historic nature of your campaign."

Unsurprisingly, Harris has embraced much of the same platform as Biden. In her stump speeches since jumping into the presidential race, she promotes affordable child care, paid family leave and expanded health care.

On Tuesday in Atlanta, she promised to target price gouging and hidden bank fees. She always emphasizes restoring the nationwide right to abortion, which was eliminated two years ago by the U.S. Supreme Court.

She's also endorsing new proposals announced by Biden since she took over the campaign, including term limits for Supreme Court justices and binding ethics rules. In a statement, Harris said the court faces a "clear crisis of confidence" that needs to be addressed.

Presidential candidates often detail their policy ideas during primaries as they try to differentiate themselves within their party. However, Harris leapfrogged that step this year, and she may face less pressure in the compressed campaign to spell out exactly how new programs will be funded and implemented.

"In this environment, the Democratic candidate needs enough policy to tell people how she's going to bring her fight for the future alive, but not so much that it weighs down the speeches," said Jamal Simmons, a former communications director in the vice president's office.

Acting Secret Service director says he's 'ashamed' after Trump assassination attempt

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Secret Service's acting director told lawmakers Tuesday that he considered it indefensible that the roof used by the gunman in the attempted assassination of former President Donald Trump was unsecured and said it was regrettable that local law enforcement had not alerted his agency before the shooting that an armed subject had been spotted on a nearby roof.

Ronald Rowe Jr. also testified that he recently visited the shooting site and laid down on the roof of the building where shots were fired in order to evaluate the gunman's line of sight during the July 13 shooting in Butler, Pennsylvania.

"What I saw made me ashamed. As a career law enforcement officer and a 25-year Secret Service veteran, I cannot defend why that roof was not better secured," he said.

The testimony was the most detailed catalog to date by the Secret Service of law enforcement failings and miscommunications, with Rowe accepting blame for his own agency's mistakes while also pointedly criticizing local law enforcement for communication breakdowns that resulted in his agency not receiving information that a gunman, later identified as 20-year-old Thomas Matthew Crooks, had been seen on the roof of a building less than 150 yards (135 meters) from the rally stage where Trump was speaking.

"Neither the Secret Service counter sniper teams nor members of the former president's security detail had any knowledge that there was a man on the roof of the building with a firearm," Rowe said. "It is my understanding those personnel were not aware the assailant had a firearm until they heard gunshots."

He said that the shooting amounted to a "failure on multiple levels," including a failure of imagination and a "failure to challenge our assumptions."

"We assumed that the state and locals had it," Rowe said. "We made an assumption that there was going to be uniformed presence out there, that there would be sufficient eyes to cover that, that there was going to be counter-sniper teams" in the building from whose roof Crooks fired shots.

"And I can assure you," Rowe added, "that we're not going to make that mistake again."

He said he had implemented multiple reforms since taking over as acting director last week, including mandating that every event security plan is vetted by multiple experienced supervisors before being implemented, expanding the use of aerial drones to improve visibility of roofs, dedicating more resources to improve communications at events where the Secret Service is operating. He said he's also directed that federal and local counter snipers work together on roofs.

World

Hamas: Leader assassinated in Tehran by Israeli airstrike

BEIRUT (AP)—Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh was assassinated in Iran after attending the inauguration of the country's new president, Iran and the militant group said early Wednesday.

AP

In this photo released by the Iranian Presidency Office, President Masoud Pezeshkian, right, shakes hands with Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh at the start of their meeting at the President's office in Tehran, Iran, Tuesday, July 30, 2024.

Hamas blamed an Israeli airstrike for the death of the head of the Palestinian militant group's political bureau. Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard said it was investigating the attack and did not say how it occurred.

Israel has vowed to kill Haniyeh and other leaders of Hamas over the group's Oct. 7 attack on Israel that killed 1,200 people and saw some 250 others taken hostage.

An Israeli military spokesman did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Israel often doesn't comment on assassinations carried out by its Mossad intelligence agency.

Hamas said Haniyeh was killed "in a Zionist airstrike on his residence in Tehran" after he attended the swearing-in of Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian on Tuesday, along with other Hamas officials and officials from Hezbollah and allied groups.

"Hamas declares to the great Palestinian people and the people of the Arab and Islamic nations and all the free people of the world, brother leader Ismail Ismail Haniyeh a martyr," Hamas said in its terse statement.

In another statement, the group quoted Haniyeh as saying that the Palestinian cause has "costs" and "we are ready for these costs: martyrdom for the sake of Palestine, and for the sake of God Almighty, and for the sake of the dignity of this nation."

Hamas officials did not immediately respond to requests for further comment.

In the West Bank, the internationally backed Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas condemned Haniyeh's killing, calling it a "cowardly act and dangerous development." Political factions in the occupied territory called for strikes in protest at the killing.

Haniyeh left the Gaza Strip in 2019 and had lived in exile in Qatar. The top Hamas leader in Gaza is Yehya Sinwar, who masterminded the Oct. 7 attack.

In April, an Israeli airstrike in Gaza killed three of Haniyeh's sons and four of his grandchildren.

In an interview with the Al Jazeera satellite channel at the time, Haniyeh said the killings would not pressure Hamas into softening its positions amid ongoing cease-fire negotiations with Israel.

The killing of Haniyeh comes after Israel carried out a rare strike on Beirut, which it said killed Fouad Shukur, a top Hezbollah military commander. Hezbollah has not confirmed Shukur's death in the strike, which also killed at least one woman and two children and wounded dozens of people.

The strike came amid escalating hostilities with the Lebanese militant group. The U.S. also blames Shukur for planning and launching the deadly 1983 Marine bombing in the Lebanese capital.

Meanwhile, Iraq's Popular Mobilization Forces, a coalition of Iranian-backed militias, said that a strike Tuesday night on a base southwest of Baghdad killed four members of the Kataib Hezbollah militia.

ASIAN BRIEFS

China accuses Japan of 'smear attacks' in recent talks with the US, India, Australia

BEIJING (AP)—China has expressed strong dissatisfaction to Japan about what it called "smear attacks" against China at recent high-level meetings with the United States, India and Australia, the Foreign Ministry said Wednesday. A ministry statement said that Liu Jinsong, the director general of the Asian affairs department, conveyed solemn representations and serious concern at a meeting the previous day with Akira Yokochi, the deputy chief of mission at the Japanese Embassy. "Liu pointed out that Japan's smear attacks on China are self-contradictory to its statement of promoting the strategic and reciprocal relationship between the two countries," the statement said. Meeting in Tokyo on Sunday, Japan's foreign and defense ministers agreed to bolster military cooperation with the U.S. at what are known as "2+2" talks with their American counterparts.

Rescuers search through mud and debris as deaths rise to 151 in landslides in southern India

NEW DELHI (AP)—Hundreds of rescue workers searched through mud and debris Wednesday from multiple landslides that have killed at least 151 people in southern India, police said. The multiple landslides occurred after torrential rains triggered torrents of mud and water that swept through tea estates and villages. Another 186 people were injured by the landslides that hit hilly areas in Kerala state's Wayanad district early Tuesday, flattening houses, uprooting trees and destroying bridge, said police officer Aijaz, who uses one name. More than a dozen bodies were found overnight, Aijaz said, as over 300 rescuers worked to pull out people stuck under mud and debris, but their efforts were hampered by blocked roads and unstable terrain.

Life & Style

Serena Williams, Nicole Kidman, other A-list celebrities watch Biles win another Olympic gold

PARIS (AP)—Celebrity spotting was again part of the event at a raucous Bercy Arena when Simone Biles powered a dominant U.S. women's gymnastics team to the Olympic title on Tuesday night.

A-listers Nicole Kidman, Natalie Portman and Serena Williams gathered at the Olympic venue to watch the most decorated athlete in the history of gymnastics during the team final.

Spike Lee, Michael Phelps and former ace gymnast Nadia Comaneci were also in the crowd to witness the return to the top of the U.S. women after they relinquished their title three years ago in Tokyo.

Williams has been in Paris for a few days and carried the Olympic torch during the opening ceremony last week. She sat next to Paris Games chief Tony Estanguet.

Kidman and her husband, Keith Urban, were there with their two daughters. When asked if she was looking forward to the competition, Kidman said: "So excited! So excited!"

Biles' husband was also in the stands after he reached the French capital city in time for the women's team final. Jonathan Owens, an NFL player with the Chicago Bears, was granted leave from training camp to be here.

Owens sat alongside Biles' mother and father, Nellie and Ron Biles.

Simone Biles had a wide grin as she jogged off the podium following her routine on the uneven bars. Phelps stood and applauded her, his own arms raised high as he clapped for America's star gymnast. He appeared to be filming her on his cellphone.

Lee also jumped to his feet to cheer for Biles just as if he was courtside at a New York Knicks game. The actor and movie director had a front row seat, above the vault runaway, wearing white-framed glasses and a USA basketball shirt.

AP

Serena Williams is seen in the stands before the women's artistic gymnastics team finals round at Bercy Arena at the 2024 Summer Olympics, Tuesday, July 30, 2024, in Paris, France.

Lady Gaga, Tom Cruise and Jessica Chastain attended Biles' return to the Olympics when she competed in qualifying Sunday.

The 27-year-old Biles competed in all four events of the team final. With Biles at her show-stopping best, the Americans' total of 171.296 was well clear of Italy and Brazil.

French police investigating abuse targeting Olympic opening ceremony DJ over 'Last Supper' tableau

PARIS (AP)—A storm of outrage about the Paris Olympics' opening ceremony — including angry comments from Donald Trump— took a legal turn Tuesday, with French prosecutors ordering police to investigate complaints of online abuse from a DJ and LGBTQ+ icon who performed.

DJ Barbara Butch said she suffered a torrent of online threats in the wake of a contentious scene at the Games' opening ceremony. A lawyer for Butch told The Associated Press that she had filed a formal legal complaint alleging online harassment, death threats, and insults. The lawyer, Audrey Msellati, said the complaint doesn't name any specific perpetrator or perpetrators of the alleged crimes.

The Paris prosecutor's office confirmed that it received Butch's complaint and said it tasked a police unit that specializes in fighting hate crimes to investigate. The police probe will focus on "discriminatory messages based on religion or sexual orientation that were sent to her or posted online," it said.

Although the ceremony's artistic director Thomas Jolly has repeatedly said that he wasn't inspired by "The Last Supper," critics interpreted part of the show that featured Butch as a mockery of Leonardo Da Vinci's painting showing Jesus Christ and his apostles. Butch, who calls herself a "love activist," wore a silver headdress that looked like a halo as she got a party going during her segment of the show. Drag artists, dancers and others flanked Butch on both sides.

AP

Drag queens prepare to perform on the Debilly Bridge in Paris, during the opening ceremony of the 2024 Summer Olympics, Friday, July 26, 2024.

Trump, in the United States, said Monday he thought it was "a disgrace."

"I'm very open-minded," the former president and current Republican nominee told Fox News host Laura Ingraham, who specifically asked about comparisons to "The Last Supper," "but I thought what they did was a disgrace."

French Catholic bishops and others were among those who said Christians had been hurt and offended. Paris Olympics organizers have said there was "never an intention to show disrespect to any religious group" and that the intent was to "celebrate community tolerance."

Jolly has said he saw the moment as a celebration of diversity, and the table on which Butch spun her tunes as a tribute to feasting and French gastronomy.

"My wish isn't to be subversive, nor to mock or to shock," Jolly said. "Most of all, I wanted to send a message of love, a message of inclusion and not at all to divide."

Performer Philippe Katerine, who appeared in the next scene painted blue and nearly nude in a tribute to Dionysus, also told Le Monde newspaper that "The Last Supper" had not been referenced at all in preparations for the overall sketch.

In a statement of her own, posted on Instagram, Butch said: "Whatever some may say, I exist. I've never been ashamed of who I am, and I take responsibility for everything—including my artistic choices. All my life, I've refused to be a victim: I won't shut up."

She said she "was extremely honored" to perform in Friday's ceremony and "my heart is still full of joy."

"I'm committed, and I'm proud. Proud of who I am, of what I am, and of what I embody, both for my loved ones and for millions of French people. My France is France !" she wrote.

In an AP interview Tuesday, Msellati described Butch as in "a fighting spirit"—eager to defend herself and her choices, and still very proud of her participation. "She has no regrets, even now," the lawyer said.

Wife chooses to travel alone instead of with family

DEAR ABBY: Fifteen years into our marriage, I'm struggling to honor my wife's desire for space and independence. I can be a hopeless romantic, and my attempts to communicate my desire for trustworthy and healthy boundaries have actually made it worse.

We had a romantic origin story in a foreign country, and we haven't had a vacation together with the kids in 10 years. She enjoys going on solo vacations so she can be "free" to have adventures where she can get attention from other men.

I trust her and love her deeply, but her returning to the exact location where we met romantically so she can be the object of other men's desire is hurtful. When I've communicated this, she says I'm being "needy." I disagree.

How can I let my wife be free and independent when the ways in which she does it are hurtful to me? When I express this openly and honestly, I'm made to feel as if it's a "me" problem to resolve for myself.

There are subtle and sometimes overt comments that make me feel like our connection is slipping away, and I refuse to let that happen. We are in counseling, but she's against it. What do you do when your desire for a deeper connection with your wife is rebuffed?

LOSING IT IN NEW YORK

DEAR LOSING IT: I am so glad you and your wife are in counseling, because you both need it. Since your wife is doing this against her will, I urge you to continue alone if necessary.

Please understand that you cannot save a marriage all by yourself. There has to be a mutual willingness, and it often involves compromise. Ten years since a family vacation is a very long time. For her to take solo vacations so she can appear to be single (if that's her reason) is hardly working on your marriage, and you have not been "needy" by pointing out that fact.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: I'm a twice widowed lady. I'm also a snowbird. There is a gentleman, also a snowbird, who comes south and stays with the family across the street from me. He's very nice, and we have gone to dinner a few times, but I have no desire to have more than a casual relationship. I drink good wine; he's a beer drinker.

Last week, he came to visit and brought a large bottle of very inexpensive (and awful) wine. I graciously had a small glass, but it wasn't to my liking. He has mentioned that he has bought yet another bottle of this wine for us to share.

How do I tell him I only want to be friends and that my taste in wine is more refined than his without coming across as a snob? I don't want to hurt his feelings, but I just can't drink another glass of it.

CABERNET QUEEN IN FLORIDA

DEAR ABBY

BY ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

DEAR QUEEN: Before you see this nice man again, ask him to return the wine he purchased "for you to share" and tell him it's your turn to bring the wine. People have different tastes, and it isn't "snobbish" to make your preference known. As to the issue of just wanting to be friends, once he sees the price of the wine you prefer, he may be only too glad to go back to his beer.

■■■

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

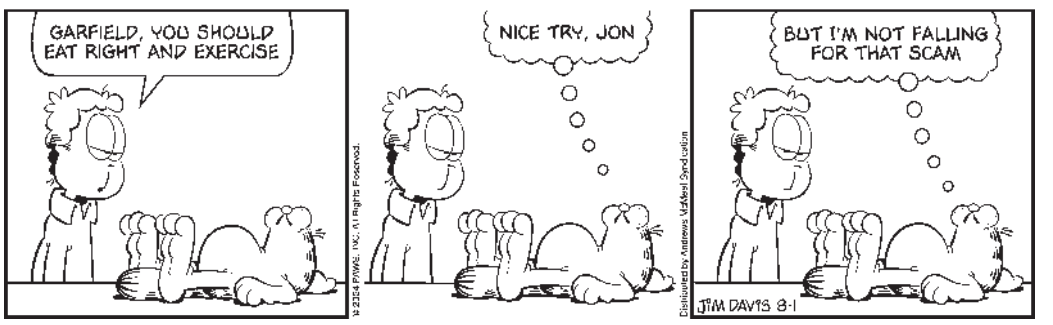
Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

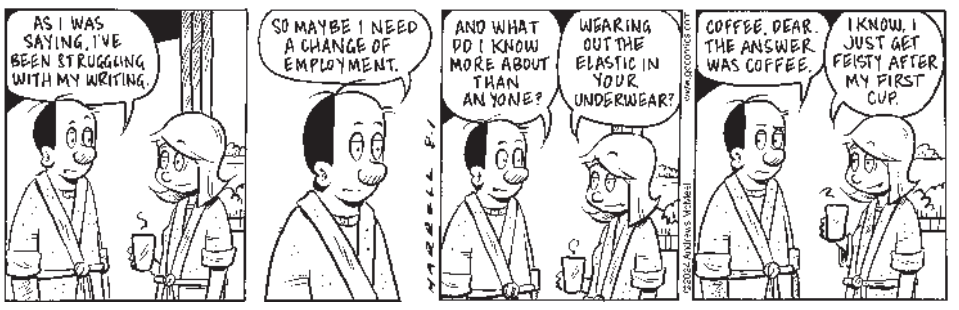
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


AS I WAS SAYING, I'VE BEEN STRUGGLING WITH MY WRITING.
SO MAYBE I NEED A CHANGE OF EMPLOYMENT.
AND WHAT DO I KNOW MORE ABOUT THAN ANYONE?
WEARING OUT THE ELASTIC IN YOUR UNDERWEAR?
COFFEE. DEAR. THE ANSWER WAS COFFEE.
I KNOW. I JUST GET FEISTY AFTER MY FIRST CUP.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

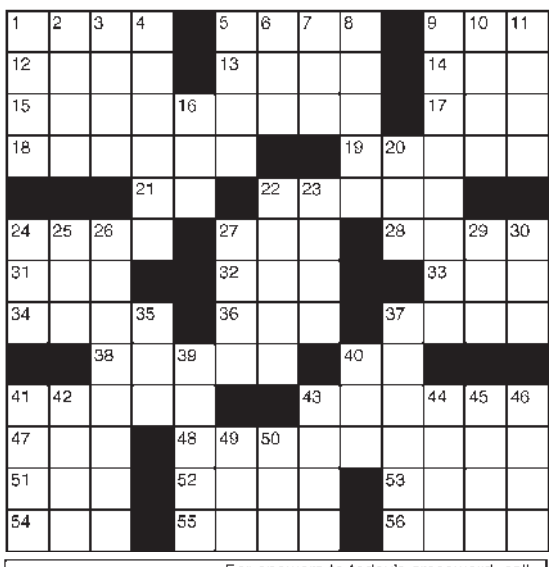
ACROSS
1 Profit
5 Foreshadow
9 Tiara jewel
12 Too
13 Litter's littlest
14 — Dawn Chong
15 Pricey timepiece
17 Celestial altar
18 Veteran sailor
19 Pharaoh's land
21 Type measure
22 Threaded hardware
24 Nickname for Dallas
27 Fan's shout
28 Harboring a grudge
31 GI-entertaining gp.
32 "Am — blame?"
33 Rent out
34 Not barefoot
36 Spigot
37 True pals, in texts
38 Like a bubblehead
40 Either mate
41 "Please explain"
43 Perfect place
47 — Jima
48 "American Gothic" painter
51 Not "agin"
52 Slightly
53 — bene
54 Squid squirt
55 Missile shelter
56 Poetry contest

DOWN
1 Jokes
2 Hand lotion ingredient
3 "La — Bonita"
4 Agreed silently
5 Boast
6 Ump's call
7 Pol. party org.
8 Old anesthetic
9 Large canine of Eurasia and North America
10 Lawman Wyatt
11 Vegan's no-no
16 Triumphed
20 Some fridges
22 Skewered Thai dish
23 Karate move
24 Commuter's choice
25 "Kinda" suffix
26 "Well done!"
27 Cracker name
29 Ump
30 UFO pilots
35 Insult
37 Cleveland squad
39 Roman robes
40 Slugger Mel
41 LP player
42 Actor Clive
43 Golden Rule word
44 Combine
45 Greek vowel
46 Driver of "Logan Lucky"
49 Hitter's stat
50 Be sick

Solution time: 24 mins.

F	A	N	S	■	W	E	D	■	P	S	S	T
A	R	E	A	■	H	U	R	■	A	N	I	S
Q	U	A	G	M	I	R	E	■	R	O	N	A
S	T	R	A	D	S	■	A	N	S	W	E	R
■	■	■	S	I	P	■	D	C	I	■	■	■
M	A	C	■	X	E	S	■	S	N	I	D	E
B	O	I	R	■	R	A	P	■	G	R	A	D
A	K	E	C	M	■	M	I	A	■	C	L	S
■	■	■	S	P	E	C	■	L	B	S	■	■
Y	C	H	O	H	O	■	G	L	I	D	E	R
O	B	I	S	■	S	U	R	E	F	I	R	E
G	E	R	E	■	T	R	I	■	T	A	T	E
A	Y	E	S	■	A	I	M	■	S	L	E	D

Yesterday's answer 8-1



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Madison Bumgarner, 35; Jason Momoa, 45; Adam Duritz, 60; Chuck D, 64.

Happy Birthday: Rein in your emotions and do your due diligence this year before making a move. Feeling uncertain is a warning sign to sit tight and observe. Put your time and energy where you can make the most difference to the people you love and your concerns regarding a suitable and sustainable lifestyle. Opportunity is within reach, but so are stumbling blocks. Your numbers are 3, 9, 22, 28, 34, 41, 47.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Keep your emotions out of your decision-making. Set your speed on high, target what you want and make a move that satisfies your soul. Engage in events or pastimes that get you out and about and encourage you to gain physical strength and connect with like-minded people. ✪✪

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Establish what you want and who you want to tag along. Forcing your will on others or doing something you don't want to do at someone else's demands is futile. Peace of mind comes from doing your own thing and giving others the same privilege. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Take a moment to figure out what you want before you discuss your agenda. Be resourceful, find out what's possible and create a plan that works for you. Research will lead to domestic and lifestyle changes that make you happy and able to fulfill your needs. ✪✪✪

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Be careful what you agree to or take on today. Don't limit or position yourself for failure. Source out what's doable and be candid about what you are willing to sacrifice. An honest assessment and passionate confirmation regarding your contribution will give you leverage. ✪✪✪

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Put your energy into something you feel passionate about, and you'll feel satisfied with your achievements. Rise above any anger or disruption someone pushes your way and take the path that leads to peace of mind. It's up to you to make decisions that fit your lifestyle. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Make charm a priority to sway others to think like you. Engage in talks that allow you to map out your plan to rectify your concerns at work or in your personal life. Truth matters, and offering incentives will help you get what you want. ✪✪✪✪

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Greater involvement in a community that interests you will broaden your perspective and help you add diversity to what you participate in and how you live. Refrain from settling for less when you can have more. Consider your goals. ✪✪

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You need to spend more time playing and less worrying about things you cannot change. Address your needs and act accordingly, and you will encounter people who can offer sound advice based on trial and error. Change is within reach, but first, establish what you want and need. ✪✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Actions speak louder than words today, so stop procrastinating and start doing. Put your plans in motion and be ready to rectify any problem before it disrupts your plans spontaneously. Take control, and you'll avoid someone stepping in and taking over. Protect your health and well-being. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Your emotions will interfere with your financial, medical or contractual dealings. When in doubt, take a breather and rethink your long-term plans. Time is on your side, so don't allow anyone to pressure you into something you aren't ready to pursue. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You'll gravitate toward interesting people and activities. Cast your fate to the wind and enjoy what life offers. Choose peace and love over discord and chaos, and you'll find the path that leads to your happy place. An unexpected change will turn out better than anticipated. ✪✪✪

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Share your enthusiasm with someone who enjoys the same things as you. A relationship built on intellect and interests will help you discover what's important to you. Don't hesitate to share your thoughts and express your feelings. Find out what's possible before you proceed. ✪✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are thorough, intentional and spontaneous. You are intense and sensitive.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

6		9		7		2	3	
			9					6
3		7			8			
4	9				5			1
	1			4				
5		8		2		4	9	3
					2	1		
			4		7	3		8
7	3							

Difficulty: ★★★ 8/1

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

2	9	1	5	6	7	4	8	3
8	4	6	3	9	1	5	7	2
7	5	3	2	4	8	6	9	1
9	1	8	4	2	5	7	3	6
4	3	5	1	7	6	9	2	8
6	7	2	8	3	9	1	4	5
3	6	4	7	1	2	8	5	9
1	8	7	9	5	3	2	6	4
5	2	9	6	8	4	3	1	7

Difficulty: ★★★ 7/31

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

RENTING HEAVY EQUIPMENT Solution: 8 letters

S	H	R	E	D	D	E	R	E	H	C	N	E	R	T
T	C	I	N	A	H	C	E	M	A	C	H	I	N	E
E	R	E	N	O	V	A	T	E	T	N	E	M	E	C
E	A	S	P	H	A	L	T	G	N	I	N	I	M	H
R	N	F	K	S	T	R	E	E	T	O	R	X	I	N
A	E	O	B	I	S	A	C	N	I	K	E	E	L	I
L	R	R	Y	E	D	K	E	T	O	S	L	R	I	C
L	O	K	T	S	H	M	C	R	C	G	L	S	T	I
I	T	L	E	A	H	U	O	O	R	Ⓒ	O	O	A	A
P	C	I	F	C	R	T	O	G	R	I	Ⓡ	L	R	N
R	A	F	A	T	A	P	N	E	L	S	A	Ⓔ	Y	D
E	R	T	S	R	T	I	Y	E	L	L	U	P	Ⓦ	N
T	T	N	E	R	V	C	I	R	T	C	E	L	E	A
A	O	P	A	A	E	A	R	T	H	M	O	V	E	R
C	O	M	P	A	C	T	O	R	E	D	L	U	O	B

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Asphalt, Attachment, Boulder, Brand, Case, Caterpillar, Cement, Compactor, Construction, Crane, Crew, Earth Mover, Electric, Forklift, Logo, Machine, Mechanic, Military, Mining, Mixer, Operator, Paving, Pulley, Renovate, Repair, Rocks, Roller, Safety, Scoop Tram, Shredder, Skid, Soil, Steer, Street, Technician, Tractor, Trencher

Yesterday's Answer: Farm

The NEW **Treasury 58** can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480. (In Canada, call 1-855-232-2367)

Biles celebrates yet another gold while Gauff fumes over call in loss

AP

Simone Biles, of the United States, performs on the floor during the women's artistic gymnastics team finals round at Bercy Arena at the 2024 Summer Olympics, Tuesday, July 30, 2024, in Paris, France.

PARIS (AP)—Simone Biles reached the top of the podium yet again, cementing her legacy as the greatest American gymnast and one of the best athletes in the history of the Olympics.

Biles helped the United States win the women's team event Tuesday to secure her fifth Olympic gold medal and put the U.S. back on top of the sport after a second-place finish three years ago in Tokyo.

Biles became the most decorated American gymnast in front of a crowd that included Nicole Kidman, Natalie Portman, Serena Williams, Spike Lee, Michael Phelps and Nadia Comaneci at a raucous Bercy Arena.

It was the eighth Olympic medal for the 27-year-old Biles, who was previously tied with Shannon Miller at seven.

Italy won the silver medal, and Brazil got the bronze.

There were no such triumphs in swimming for the Americans, who couldn't manage more than silver and bronze medals. In tennis, it was Coco Gauff left fuming over an officiating decision in a loss to Donna Vekic of Croatia.

There were no winners or losers in men's triathlon, which was as postponed because of concerns about the water quality in the Seine River amid a heat wave that made life difficult on some athletes and fans in Paris.

US swimming woes

Australian Kaylee McKeown knocked off world record holder Regan Smith of the United States in the 100 backstroke to defend her the title from the Tokyo Games.

Smith couldn't hold off the hard-charging Aussie, who touched the wall in 57.33 seconds to win by a relatively comfortable margin over Smith's 57.66. The U.S. also grabbed the bronze with Katharine Berkoff.

In the men's 800 freestyle, Daniel Wiffen won Ireland's first gold medal in swimming since scandal-plagued Michelle Smith won three events in 1996. Defending champion Bobby Finke of the U.S. got the silver.

The night's other gold medal went to Britain, which defended its title in the men's 4x200 freestyle relay, with the U.S. earning yet another silver.

Gauff upset

The scene felt all too familiar to Gauff. An officiating decision she was sure was wrong. A chair umpire who wouldn't listen. Tears streaming down her cheeks. And, most disappointing of all, a loss, this time at the Paris Games.

Even the site was the same: Court Philippe Chatrier was where the reigning U.S. Open champion was eliminated in the third round at the Summer Games by Donna Vekic of Croatia 7-6 (7), 6-2.

That's also the main stadium used annually for the French Open, where Gauff found herself in a nearly identical dispute over a call while being defeated by eventual champion Iga Swiatek in the semifinals last month.

"There's been multiple times this year where that's happened to me—where I felt like I always have to be an advocate for myself on the court," Gauff said afterward, renewing a call for video review to be used in tennis, as it is in many other professional sports.

Gauff was the female flag bearer for the United States during the opening ceremony on Friday.

Also in tennis, Rafael Nadal and Carlos Alcaraz advanced into the doubles quarterfinals with a 6-4, 6-7 (2), 10-2 match tiebreaker victory over Tallon Griekspoor and Wesley Koolhof of the Netherlands.

No. 1-ranked Iga Swiatek defeated No. 52 Wang Xiyu of China 6-2, 6-4.

Triathlon postponed

The men's triathlon scheduled for Tuesday was postponed because of concerns about the water quality in the Seine River.

It was rescheduled for Wednesday, when the women's competition is also slated to be held. But both will happen only if water tests show acceptable levels of E. coli and other bacteria. Friday is also planned as a backup date.

There is rain forecast Tuesday night through Thursday, which could complicate rescheduling because rain generally causes an increase in bacteria levels in the Seine, the long-polluted waterway that has gone through an expensive cleanup effort.

"It's disappointing that there's this negative aspect now with the delay," American triathlete Seth Rider said. "But I hope we can have a triathlon and I can accomplish this dream that I've had since I was a little kid."

Heat wave

After enduring the rain in the opening ceremony, athletes now are having to deal with the heat.

Most of France is under heat warnings, with temperatures in Paris hitting 36 degrees Celsius (97 Fahrenheit), the national weather agency said. Air conditioning is far less common in French homes, shops and restaurants than in places like the United States.

The heat was even worse in the south, including the region around the Mediterranean cities of Marseille and Nice that are hosting Olympic competitions like soccer and sailing. It was as hot as 41 C (105 F) in parts of southern France.

Before winning the gold Tuesday, Biles posted a video on Instagram while struggling with the lack of air conditioning.

"Don't come for me about my hair," Biles wrote on Instagram before the gymnastics team final. "IT WAS DONE but bus has NO AC and it's like 9,000 degrees. Oh & a 45 minutes ride."

US men's soccer team ends 24-year wait to reach QF at Olympics

AP

United States' Kevin Paredes celebrates scoring his side's 3rd goal during the men's Group A soccer match between the United States and Guinea, at Geoffroy-Guichard Stadium, during the 2024 Summer Olympics, Tuesday, July 30, 2024, in Saint-Etienne, France.

SAINT-ETIENNE, France (AP)—To chants of "U.S.A." America's men ended a 24-year wait to reach the quarterfinals of the Olympic soccer tournament by beating Guinea 3-0 on Tuesday.

Victory in Saint-Etienne saw the U.S. reach the knockout phase of the Games for the first time since Sydney 2000, and it will play Morocco in Paris on Friday.

"Right now I'm living this moment and we'll analyze what it means once we are done with it," U.S. coach Marko Mitrovic said.

Two goals from Kevin Paredes and a brilliant free kick from Djordje Mihailovic secured the victory that meant the U.S. advanced in second place behind Group A winner France, which beat New Zealand 3-0.

The Americans—playing in the Olympics for the first time since Beijing 2008—responded impressively to their opening 3-0 loss to France by winning back-to-back games against New Zealand and Guinea.

Next up is a Morocco team that finished atop Group B and beat Argentina along the way.

"I watched actually the first game against Argentina," Mitrovic said. "I was in my room, our game was 9 p.m., theirs was 3 p.m. I actually think they are a very, very good team."

A win against Morocco would see the U.S. emulate its performance in Sydney when it reached the semifinals.

"We came here to be who we are and I think we did it again today and we just have to recover and go to the next game," Mitrovic said.

Mihailovic, who hit the bar when the score was still goalless in the game against France, scored a curling free kick from the edge of the area to give the U.S. the lead in the 14th minute.

Paredes slotted in his first in the 31st and powered in another in the 75th.

France vs. Argentina

It will be a repeat of the World Cup final when France meets Argentina in the quarterfinals in Bordeaux on Friday.

Argentina won that epic contest on penalties after a 3-3 draw in Qatar in 2022 and rivalries between the nations could be intensified by racist chants made by Argentina's players after they won the Copa America this month.

"I won't talk about it," France coach Thierry Henry said Tuesday. "We just qualified. We're going to play a game. My head is still into this game."

France maintained its 100% record at the tournament with victory over New Zealand in Marseille through goals from Jean-Philippe Mateta, Desire Doue and Arnaud Kalimuendo.

Thiago Almada scored a brilliant solo in Argentina's 2-0 win over Ukraine — securing back-to-back victories after the shock opening defeat to Morocco. Claudio Echeverri sealed the win, but it wasn't enough to advance atop Group B.

Morocco took top spot after beating Iraq 3-0 in Nice.

Morocco and Argentina were level on points and had identical goal difference and goals scored. It meant Morocco took first place by virtue of its 2-1 win over Argentina at the start of the tournament.

Palestinian protest

Play was briefly suspended during the second half in Nice after a man holding a Palestinian flag invaded the pitch. He was swiftly removed by police. Several dozen riot police were then deployed along the field to prevent further incidents.

At the Parc des Princes in Paris, where Israel played Japan, fans held a banner that read "Genocide Olympics."

Egypt stuns Spain

Ibrahim Adel scored a pair of goals and Egypt advanced atop its group by beating Spain 2-1.

Spain had already reached the knockout round and was vying for a first-place finish in Group C but was instead leapfrogged after defeat in Bordeaux.

Dominican Republic played to a 1-1 tie with Uzbekistan, which had already been eliminated.

Second place for Spain means it has a quarterfinals match against Japan, which maintained its 100% record in Group D when Mao Hosoya scored in stoppage time to beat Israel 1-0.

Egypt plays Paraguay, which finished runner-up in Group D after Marcelo Fernandez's goal secured a 1-0 win over Mali.

Ramírez hits 243rd homer as Guardians beat Tigers

DETROIT (AP)—José Ramírez moved past Albert Belle into sole possession of second place on the Cleveland career home run list with his 243rd, hitting his third in two games to help the Guardians beat the Detroit Tigers 5-0 on Tuesday.

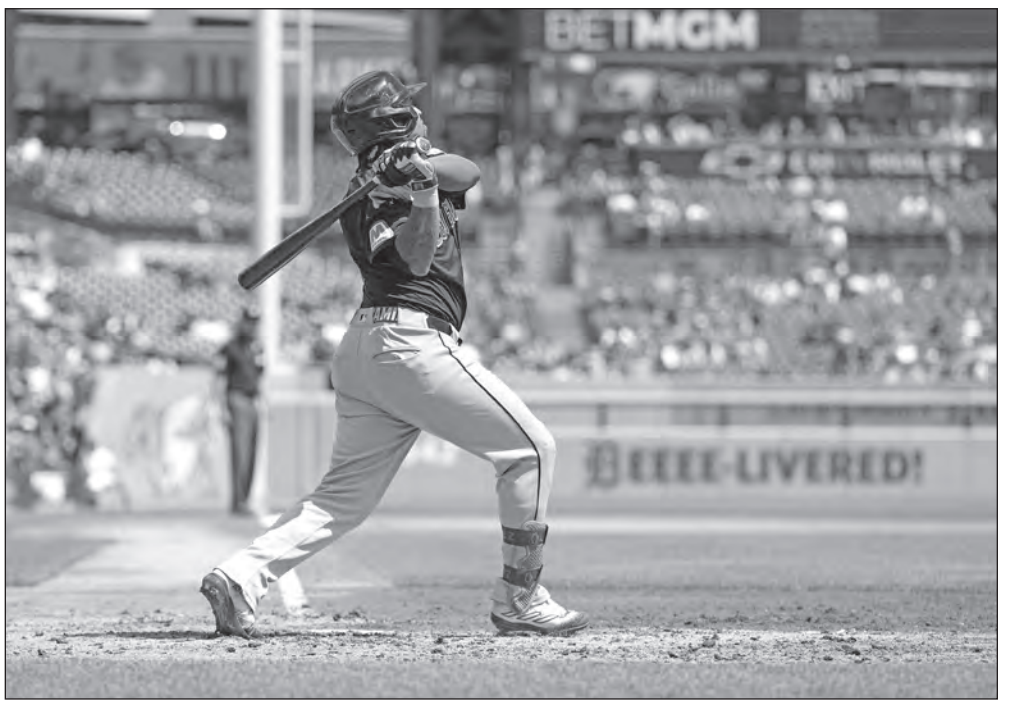
Josh Naylor hit a first-inning homer off Alex Faedo (5-3) and Ramírez hit a two-run drive in the eighth against Jason Foley. The 31-year-old Ramírez has spent his entire 12-year big league career with Cleveland.

Hall of Famer Jim Thome tops the Cleveland home run list with 337, part of a 22-year career that included 612 homers for six teams.

Brayan Rocchio added a ninth-inning homer off Joey Wentz.

Lane Thomas went 1 for 4 in his Guardians debut, scoring on Ramírez's home run. Thomas was acquired Monday from Washington.

Cleveland has won three straight and six of eight. The Tigers have lost three in a row heading into the trade deadline.



AP

Cleveland Guardians designated hitter Jose Ramírez follows through on his two-run home run during the eighth inning of a baseball game against the Detroit Tigers, Tuesday, July 30, 2024, in Detroit.

ORIOLES 6, BLUE JAYS 2

BALTIMORE (AP)—Corbin Burnes took a two-hitter into the seventh inning, Ramón Urías and Anthony Santander homered and Baltimore beat depleted Toronto.

Baltimore built a 4-0 lead in the third inning and improved to 6-6 since the All-Star break to remain atop the AL East.

Burnes gave up two runs and four hits with seven strikeouts over 6 2/3 innings. Although the Orioles added starters Zach Eflin and Trevor Rogers before the trade deadline, Burnes (11-4, 2.47 ERA) remains the unquestioned ace of the staff.

METS 2, TWINS 0

NEW YORK (AP)—Sean Manaea struck out a season-best 11 over seven dominant innings Tuesday night, pitching the New York Mets to a victory over Minnesota.

Mark Vientos homered and J.D. Martinez had an RBI single to help the Mets (57-50) win for the 15th time in 21 games. They matched their season high at seven games above .500.

Manaea (7-4) yielded two hits and one walk while allowing just one runner beyond first base. The 11 strikeouts were his most since fanning 12 for San Diego against Atlanta in May 2022. The left-hander has a 1.50 ERA in his last four starts at Citi Field.

Ryne Stanek got two outs in the eighth and Edwin Díaz struck out Byron Buxton with two runners on to end the inning. Buxton whiffed all four times up, and Royce Lewis fanned three times.

REDS 6, CUBS 3

CINCINNATI (AP)—Santiago Espinal extended his hit streak to 10 games with a two-run homer in the second inning and Cincinnati held on to beat the Chicago Cubs.

TJ Friedl drove in two runs with a first-inning base hit, Tyler Stephenson also had an RBI as part of the three-run second inning, and Spencer Steer drove in another with a double in the eighth.

Tony Santillan got the start for the Reds because the scheduled starter, Frankie Montas, was traded to Milwaukee earlier in the day. Seven Reds pitchers combined to hold the Cubs to three runs and seven hits.

RAYS 9, MARLINS 3

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla., (AP)—Trade acquisition Christopher Morel homered in his Tampa Bay debut, helping the new-look Rays come from behind to beat Miami.

Ben Rortvedt and Yandy Diaz each contributed two-run singles off reliever Declan Cronin (2-3) during a five-run sixth inning that propelled the Rays to a 6-3 lead. Jose Caballero added an RBI double, then stole home to extend the lead in the seventh.

Morel, acquired Sunday in a trade that sent All-Star infielder Isaac Paredes to Chicago, homered to left center field off Marlins starter Edward Cabrera leading off the fourth inning. The deal was one of several the Rays made the past week with an eye on positioning themselves for success in coming years.

BRAVES 5, BREWERS 1

MILWAUKEE (AP)—Jarred Kelenic broke out of a month-long slump by hitting a homer and double in the Atlanta victory over Milwaukee.

Austin Riley went 4 for 5 as the Braves won despite leaving 11 men on base.

Kelenic doubled during Atlanta's four-run outburst in the third inning and hit a solo shot over the left-field wall in the fourth.

Before Tuesday, Kelenic had batted just .125 (11 of 88) in July with a .189 on-base percentage and .239 slugging percentage. The slump had caused his batting average to sink from .278 to .235, while his OPS plunged from .781 to .681.

Kelenic, who grew up in the Milwaukee suburb of Waukesha, Wisconsin, had a large group of fans cheering him on from behind the Braves' dugout.

Braves pitcher Bryce Elder (2-4) ended a slide of his own.

CARDINALS 8, RANGERS 1

ST. LOUIS, (AP)—Tommy Pham hit a pinch-hit grand slam in his first game back with the Cardinals and St. Louis beat the Texas Rangers 8-1 on Tuesday night.

Pham's blast off reliver Cody Bradford capped a five-run fifth. It was his first at-bat since being dealt to the Cardinals from the White Sox as part of a three-team trade on Monday. Pham began his career with the Cardinals, who drafted him in the sixth round in 2006.

Pham's second career grand slam, and his first since May 6, 2019, helped make a winner out of Lance Lynn, who gave up one run on three hits in five innings. Lynn (6-4) struck out three and walked one as the Cardinals won for the second time in their last three games.

YANKEES 7, PHILLIES 6, 12 INNINGS

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Jazz Chisholm had five RBIs in his second straight two-homer game, Gleyber Torres hit a go-ahead sacrifice fly in the 12th inning and the New York Yankees outlasted Philadelphia for their first four-game winning streak since early June.

Chisholm had an RBI grounder in the first, a solo homer in the sixth off Aaron Nola and a three-run homer in the seventh against Matt Strahm that put the Yankees ahead 5-4.

Chisholm has homered twice in two of three games with the Yankees after having three multihomer performances in 405 games with Miami, which traded him last weekend.

Clay Holmes' wild pitch allowed Josh Rojas to score the tying run in the ninth, Alex Verdugo's sacrifice fly put the Yankees back ahead in the 11th and Austin Hays made it 6-6 with an RBI single in the bottom half, when Trent Grisham's diving catch on Alec Bohm's two-out liner stranded Hays at third.

ROYALS 4, WHITE SOX 3

CHICAGO (AP)—The staggering Chicago White Sox lost their 16th straight game, extending a franchise record, as Michael Massey homered and Michael Wacha pitched seven strong innings to lead the Kansas City to a victory.

Bobby Witt Jr. ran his hitting streak to 12 games and had the first RBI in an eighth-inning rally that gave the Royals the lead for good.

Chicago's Andrew Vaughn homered for the second consecutive night and rookie Jonathan Cannon pitched seven terrific innings, allowing only Massey's solo shot while walking three and striking out two. He gave way to rookie Fraser Ellard (0-1), who walked two in his major league debut to set the stage for Kansas City's comeback.

Down 2-1, the Royals got a bloop single from Witt to tie it before Vinnie Pasquantino hit a two-run single off Justin Anderson.

SEATTLE 10, BOSTON 6

BOSTON (AP)—Jorge Polanco homered in the fourth inning and added and Dylan Moore drove in three with a bases-loaded double in a five-run fifth, and Seattle beat Boston.

The eight-run outburst midway through the game helped Seattle win for the fourth time in five games as the Mariners capitalized on some defensive gaffes that had Boston fans booing.

Seattle starter Luis Castillo (9-10) pitched six innings, holding Boston to three runs on six hits and a walk. He struck out three.

PIRATES 6, ASTROS 2

HOUSTON (AP)—Michael Taylor homered for the second straight game, Bailey Falter returned to the rotation and threw one-run ball into the sixth inning as Pittsburgh beat Houston.

Taylor hit a 403-foot, two-run homer off Astros starter Hunter Brown (9-7) in the sixth inning. Taylor hit a go-ahead homer in the ninth inning on Monday night in the Pirates' 5-3 victory. His fourth homer of the season also marked the first back-to-back homer games for the 33-year-old outfielder since August with Minnesota.

Falter (5-7), making his first start since July 6 due to triceps tendonitis, kept Houston in check, throwing 47 of his 66 pitches for strikes. The 27-year-old left-hander allowed six hits and one run with three strikeouts and no walks in 5 1/3 innings.

ATHLETICS 5, GIANTS 2

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—JP Sears pitched seven shutout innings and Oakland hit four home runs in a win over the San Francisco.

The A's have won eight of 11 since the All-Star break and can win their fifth straight series for the first time since 2021 with a victory on Wednesday.

Brent Rooker and Lawrence Butler stayed hot, hitting their 11th and 10th home runs in July, respectively. Daz Cameron and JJ Bleday also went deep. The A's have hit 45 home runs this month, the second most in Oakland history in July.

DIAMONDBACKS 17, NATIONALS 0

PHOENIX (AP)—Eugenio Suárez hit three homers and matched his career high with five RBIs, and the Arizona tied a team record with 22 hits in a victory over Washington.

The Diamondbacks, who scored five runs in the ninth inning for a 9-8 victory a night earlier, outscored the Nationals 24-0 since the seventh inning of Monday's game, which was the first time since 2011 that Arizona won when trailing by four runs in the ninth inning or later. The Diamondbacks won for the sixth time in seven games.

Suárez hit a two-run shot off Patrick Corbin in the first, a solo homer in the sixth off Eduardo Salazar and another solo homer against Joan Adon in the seventh—all to left field. He went 4 for 6 with an RBI single.

PADRES 6, DODGERS 5, 10 INNINGS

SAN DIEGO (AP)—Pinch-hitter Donovan Solano singled past diving third baseman Kiké Hernández with the bases loaded and one out in the 10th inning and San Diego stunned the NL West-leading Los Angeles Dodgers.

Solano's hit thrilled a record crowd of 47,559 at Petco Park and gave the Padres their eighth win in 10 games since the All-Star break.

The Padres tied it in the ninth on home runs by Manny Machado, who connected on Blake Treinen's first pitch, and a high-arcing shot to right with one out by rookie Jackson Merrill. Machado also homered off starter Tyler Glasnow in the second.

ANGELS 10, ROCKIES 7

ANAHEIM, Calif. (AP)—Matt Thaiss drove in a career-high five runs, Jo Adell hit a go-ahead home run in the seventh inning and the Los Angeles Angels overcame a four-run deficit to beat Colorado.

Thaiss became the first Angels catcher to drive in five runs with two steals in the same game and the second catcher in major league history to achieve the feat after Detroit's Mickey Cochrane in 1934.

Taylor Ward drove in three runs for the Angels, who trailed 6-2 after two innings and won for the sixth time in nine games.

Los Angeles led 7-6 before Ezequiel Tovar's seventh-inning homer off José Quijada (1-0), who got his first big league win since July 28, 2019, as a rookie with Miami. The Angels retired 16 consecutive batters before the home run.

Bridge Capital supports HANMI Charity Classic

Bridge Capital LLC is investing in the 22nd Annual HANMI Charity Classic Golf Tournament with a $750 cash donation made last Friday, July 26, by Bridge Capital LLC vice president and general manager Bartley Jackson.

"We'd like to welcome back Bridge Capital as a Superior Package sponsor for our golf tournament again this year," said tournament chair Das Krishnan. "Their continued support shows their commitment—in good times and less good—to our community and especially, our tournament."

Registration is now open for the tournament, to be held on Aug. 24, 2024, at Coral Ocean Resort Saipan. Registration forms are available at COR clubhouse, Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan front desk, and at www.saipanhotels.org.

The early bird tournament fee is $110 for CNMI residents and includes an awards banquet at Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan's Ataari Dinner Show. Optional play is $30. The fee increases to $130 after the early bird deadline on Aug. 10, 2024. Registration fee for non-CNMI residents is $180 (also includes green fee and awards banquet). Optional play will include Accurate Drive (hole No. 16), Circle (No. 6), Longest Drive (No. 18) and four chances for Nearest to the Pin (holes No. 3, 7, 12, and 14). Showtime is 6am and the tournament will start at 7am.

Early hole-in-one prizes include $5,000 cash from Island Training Solutions. The tournament will be open to the first 144 paid registrants. The tournament follows a blackjack double Peoria format.

For more information, contact tournament chair Das Krishnan at (670) 483-6405 or das.krishnan@ihg.com. ***(PR)***

HANMI

Bridge Capital LLC vice president and general manager Bartley Jackson, center, presents $750 cash on July 26, 2026, for the 22nd Annual HANMI Charity Classic Golf Tournament. Bridge Capital is a Superior Package sponsor for the tournament, slated for Aug. 24, 2024, at Coral Ocean Resort. From left, tournament chair Das Krishnan, tournament committee member Julie Litulumar, Jackson, and tournament committee members Loida Sabanal and Victoria Lee.

How will kickoffs look different in 2024 and what other rule changes are coming to the NFL

By JOSH DUBOW
AP Pro Football Writer

The NFL will have a new look this year when it comes to kickoffs.

Owners voted this spring to overhaul the kickoff, hoping to revive a play that had little action last season after most kicks resulted in no returns while still prioritizing player safety.

Owners also approved other rule changes, including banning the use of the " swivel hip-drop" tackle that had led to several injuries and in an increase in the use of instant replay.

The new rules get their first chance to be used Thursday night in the exhibition opener between Houston and Chicago in the annual Hall of Fame game.

Here's an explanation of some of the rules that will be in place this season.

How will kickoffs look different?

Owners agreed to a one-year trial of a radical change on kickoffs with a new system that borrows heavily from what was used in the XFL spring league.

The changes were made in hopes of limiting the high-speed collisions that made kickoffs so dangerous while incentivizing more returns after a sharp rise in touchbacks in recent years.

Standard kicks will still begin from the 35 but everything else will look different.

The 10 kick coverage players will line up at the opposing 40, with five on each side of the field.

The return team will have at least nine blockers lined up in the "set up zone" between the 30- and 35-yard line with at least seven of those players touching the 35. Up to two returners will be allowed inside the 20.

Only the kicker and two returners will be allowed to move until the ball hits the ground or is touched by a returner inside the 20.

Any kick that reaches the end zone in the air can be returned, or the receiving team can opt for a touchback and possession at the 30. Any kick that reaches the end zone in the air and goes out of bounds or out of the end zone also will result in a touchback at the 30.

If a ball hits a returner or the ground before the end zone and goes into the end zone, a touchback will be at the 20 or the kick can be returned. Any kick received in the field of play must be returned.

If a kick goes out of bounds before the end zone, or hits the ground or is touched by the receiving team before reaching the landing zone, the return team gets the ball at the 40.

Why did the NFL make the change?

Kickoff returns were becoming obsolete after a series of rule changes to make them safer over the past several seasons.

Last season led to a new low with just 21.8% of all kicks being returned as both kicking and receiving teams too often opted to avoid the risk of a possible return.

The return rate had a significant drop from 37.5% in 2022 and is down from 80% in 2010 before a series of rule changes on alignment, blocking techniques and the touchback eroded those numbers. The NFL estimates that more than half of all kickoffs will be returned this season.

The changes were put in place because kickoffs were the most dangerous plays with the high-speed collisions contributing to concussions.

The hope is the new rule will increase the number of returns without making it more dangerous as the new return will be more similar to a regular running play than the old version.

What's the best strategy?

Special teams coaches are still figuring that part out.

With coverage players not able to move until the ball hits the ground or a returner in the landing zone, hang time is no longer a key factor in kicks. Kicks that hit the ground in the landing zone and get into the end zone will be ideal since those touchbacks only give the return team the ball at the 20.

But the danger will be if the ball hits the ground or is touched before reaching the 20, giving the return team the ball at the 40.

For returners, the play may look more like a traditional running play than the old kickoff return, leading to more running backs as returners to capitalize on their ability to find a hole better than speedy receivers and bigger-bodied blockers and coverage players now that running 50-plus yards downfield is no longer required.

What about onside kicks?

The new rules eliminate the possibility of surprise onside kicks like the one that famously turned the tide in Super Bowl 44 when New Orleans stole an extra possession by recovering an onside kick to open the second half against Indianapolis.

Trailing teams will have to declare their intention to attempt an onside kick in the fourth quarter and those will be conducted under the same rules that had previously been in place.

The surprise onside kick isn't a common practice, with only one being attempted all last season when Denver had an unsuccessful attempt on the opening kick of the season against Las Vegas.

Hip-drop tackles

The other big rule change was the ban on a dangerous type of tackle called the "swivel hip drop."

NFL executive Jeff Miller said the tackle was used 230 times last season and resulted in 15 players missing time with injuries. It will now result in a 15-yard personal foul penalty if officials spot it on the field, or fines the following week.

A violation will occur if a defender "grabs the runner with both hands or wraps the runner with both arms and unweights himself by swiveling and dropping his hips and/or lower body, landing on and trapping the runner's leg(s) at or below the knee."

There were 212 unnecessary roughness calls last season in the regular season and playoffs so this could lead to a significant increase unless defenders curb their behavior.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

MLB STANDINGS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East Division	W	L	Pct	GB
Baltimore	64	44	.593	–
New York	64	45	.587	½
Boston	56	50	.528	7
Tampa Bay	55	52	.514	8½
Toronto	50	58	.463	14
Central Division				
Cleveland	65	42	.607	–
Minnesota	58	48	.547	6½
Kansas City	59	49	.546	6½
Detroit	52	57	.477	14
Chicago	27	83	.245	39½
West Division				
Seattle	57	52	.523	–
Houston	55	52	.514	1
Texas	52	56	.481	4½
Los Angeles	47	60	.439	9
Oakland	45	64	.413	12

NATIONAL LEAGUE

East Division	W	L	Pct	GB
Philadelphia	65	42	.607	–
Atlanta	57	49	.538	7½
New York	57	50	.533	8
Washington	49	59	.454	16½
Miami	39	68	.364	26
Central Division				
Milwaukee	61	46	.570	–
Pittsburgh	55	52	.514	6
St. Louis	55	52	.514	6
Cincinnati	52	55	.486	9
Chicago	51	58	.468	11
West Division				
Los Angeles	63	45	.583	–
San Diego	58	51	.532	5½
Arizona	57	51	.528	6
San Francisco	53	56	.486	10½
Colorado	38	70	.352	25

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SALEM

From page 20

Silver was Maite Akeakamai Alexander, while tied for bronze were Esther Louise da S. Rocha and Pearl Rosalind McConnell.

For Mattheo, a gray belt, he won gold in the Mighty-Mite 2 light-feather, 39.60-lb division. He beat out Eli Broly Rivero who settled for silver.

Nickole, at 7 years old, has recently won her third world title after winning the 2024 USA Wrestling Kids Nationals in South Carolina last June.

Mattheo, at just 5 years old, has competed in over 10 competitions and has 17 medals so far. He said of the sport, "Doing the techniques are great and easy and I have a lot of fun".

For older sister Nickole, who took a short break from competing said, "it's my second home and it's nice to see my friends again."

She's competing in the ADCC Youth Championships this Aug. 16. It's the first Youth World Championship in ADCC history. Nicko Salem, their father said, "Super proud she's going to be a part of it."

Nicko is a U.S. Marine and a 2012 graduate of Saipan Southern High School, while his wife and Nickole's mother, Maria Victoria, is an alumnae of Marianas High School. They now reside in Charleston, South Carolina.

JUST4FUN

From page 20

swing as they scored one in the third and two in the fourth from a homer by Hank Lizama Jr. and Se Lizama to get within one, 3-4, after a run by Lifoifoi.

Just4Fun added three more runs in the fifth to hold a 7-3 lead. At Pare Pack's turn in the box, they were retired in order as Lifoifoi struck out two of three batters.

From there, the homers didn't stop raining for Just4Fun as Lifoifoi hit a two-run home run to extend their lead, 9-3. Kintol then hit another solo shot in the last inning for a 10-3 game.

Pare Pack had a burst of a rally in them in the sixth inning, but it was quickly dashed. They did manage to score two more runs by Verlance Secharmidal and Lizama to get within half, 5-10. However, Lifoifoi went on to shut off Pare Pack's offense in the last inning and wrapped up their first game of the season with a win for a 1-0 record.

In other results, Brotherhood beat Bat That Ass Up, 11-4; Blue Jays took down Saipal, 21-13; Red Torch extinguished Team Luchan, 20-3; Homies silenced The Kliq, 18-0; Taotao Mona scared off AB Team, 10-3; Team Yayaya defeated We Balls, 12-2; and Team Wazzup slipped past defending champions Aimeliik Bat Boys, 13-12.

Catch the action at the Dandan Softball Field every Sunday from 9am to 4pm. The regular season games will run until November, with playoffs to be determined after.

Biles celebrates yet another gold while Gauff fumes over call in loss

PAGE 17

Saipan Tribune Sports

Bridge Capital supports HANMI Charity Classic

PAGE 19

Just4Fun light up Pare Pack, 10-5

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Just4Fun lit up Pare Pack, 10-5, on the opening day of the 2024 Budweiser Belau Amateur Softball Association Men's Slow Pitch Open League last Sunday at the Dandan Softball Field.

Just4Fun pitcher Ze Lifoifoi didn't allow any runs for Pare Pack to cross the plate as he shut down their offense in the first couple of innings. Meanwhile, Just4Fun's offense lit up Pare Pack pitcher A.J. Lizama with a run in the first from Keith Kintol, and two runs in the third from a two-run homer by Tony Salas, for a 3-0 game.

Then, Pare Pack found their

See JUST4FUN on Page 19

LEIGH GASES

Just4Fun's outfielder Ben Jones Jr. makes a running catch on a fly ball during their game against Pare Pack in the 2024 Budweiser Belau Amateur Softball Association Men's Slow Pitch Open League last Sunday at the Dandan Softball Field.

LEIGH GASES

Ze Lifoifoi, pitcher for Just4Fun, delivers a pitch during the opening day of the 2024 Budweiser Belau Amateur Softball Association Men's Slow Pitch Open League last Sunday at the Dandan Softball Field.

3rd Annual TTT Mix Classic set for Aug. 24

Youth fishing organization Tasi To Table announces that the 3rd Annual Tasi To Table Mix Classic is set for Aug. 24, 2024 from 6am to 5pm at the Smiling Cove Marina.

Prizes are as follows: $3,000 for first place, $2,000 for second place, and $1,000 for third place. Registration takes place the day before,

Aug. 23, 2024, from 4pm to 6pm at the Smiling Cove Marina.

Registration fees include $200 for each vessel consisting of one captain and two crew members, with $30 for each additional crew member.

Each registration comes with event-exclusive sun shirts with face masks and hoods for everyone on your vessel and possible in-kind giveaways.

The TTT Mix Classic is a fishing derby focused on targeted pelagic fish species. Qualifying pelagic species are as follows: Billfish, yellowfin tuna, wahoo, mahi mahi, and skipjack tuna. However, in order to qualify your catch, captains/anglers that are submitting a catch must include a combination (ex. billfish and wahoo, yellowfin tuna and skipjack tuna, etc.) of the qualifying pelagic species.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Last year's Tasi To Table Mix Classic winner *Carmelita II*'s Carmelita Castro, left, and Jeremy Koshiro pose with the boat's catch, a 104.5-lb marlin and 15.6-lb yellowfin.

The combined weight of two different pelagic species selected by the team in competition is their weight category to determine the winner. Two of the same species do not qualify.

Last year, the crew of *Carmelita II* held their own against 22 other boats and defended their title in the Tasi To Table Inc.'s 2nd Mix Classic.

The *Carmelita II* crew included Alexandro Castro Jr., Carmelita Castro, Khalia Castro, and Jeremy Koshiro—who caught a total of 120.1 lbs of eligible fish that included a 104.5-lb marlin and a 15.6-lb yellowfin tuna.

TTT is a 501©(3) nonprofit with the goal of passing fishing knowledge to future generations. Profits raised from TTT's fishing derbies go toward the organization's two-year student program for high school students. Through the program, students can earn an elective credit toward graduation, learn various fishing techniques, learn more about the various career opportunities in and around the ocean, practice environmental stewardship, and more.

For more information, email gene.weaverttt@gmail.com or call (670) 234-8274. ***(PR)***

Salem siblings golden in IBJJF Pan Kids champs

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Siblings Nickole Salem, right, and Mattheo Salem pose with their gold medals during the awards ceremony of the IBJJF Pan Kids American Championship last June 29 in Florida.

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

Siblings Nickole and Mattheo Salem are golden in their respective divisions of the IBJJF Pan Kids American Championship last June 29 in Florida.

Young, but already highly decorated martial artist Nickole, bagged gold out of 12 competitors in the Pee-Wee 2, gray belt, featherweight division.

See SALEM on Page 19